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**CTLS**

**PROGRESS REPORT**

**August 2004**

**Submitted by:**

**Olivia Rovinescu, Director**

*"The CTLS has been very effective in developing the teaching skills of young professors. The one-on-one contact identifies problems directly and the CTLS is able to suggest solutions. In tenure deliberations, the involvement of the CTLS leads to dramatically-improved course evaluations. The CTLS helps to create excellent teachers."*

Dr. Christopher Trueman, Electrical and Computer Engineering<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> In June of 2004, we requested a written evaluation from 40 clients of our teaching development services. In this group are new faculty who attended orientations and participated in intensive teaching development programs, faculty members who consulted with us individually, as well as experienced faculty and part-time instructors who participated in our workshops. Responses were thoughtful and encouraging, and we have included excerpts throughout this report to demonstrate the impact of our work. Original letters can be found in Appendix A.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

During the academic planning period 2001-2004, the Centre for Teaching and Learning Services (CTLS) has developed a diverse range of new mechanisms to meet its mandate and support the teaching mission of the University. An extensive consultation process was undertaken with Deans, Chairs and other stakeholders to ensure that the CTLS academic plan remains consistent with actual and emerging needs. Program evaluations and feedback from clients are very encouraging and demonstrate the effectiveness of the Centre's work.

The CTLS has strengthened its core services to support teacher effectiveness. One-on-one consultations continue to be successful for both new and experienced faculty, as are university-wide workshops on innovative strategies for teaching and learning. Feedback on the 18-hour intensive Instructional Skills Workshop is always extremely positive. These services have been further augmented with departmental workshops that address specific teaching issues; customized workshops for part-time instructors; and guest speakers from across Canada who have delivered original, thought-provoking workshops.

The CTLS has addressed the priority of supporting new faculty by the following initiatives: customized orientations in each Faculty; a luncheon to celebrate new faculty's first year experience; a new intensive Teaching and Learning Practicum designed for those in need of specialized support to improve teaching skills; a customized program on university teaching for new faculty in ENCS; a new faculty starter kit; and follow-up assessment.

A further objective of the CTLS is to provide orientations and workshops designed specifically to help prepare graduate students for new responsibilities as teaching assistants and instructors. In collaboration with the School of Graduate Studies, the Centre is offering for the first time this year a seminar in university teaching for Ph.D. students. This is seen as an opportunity for graduate students to improve their teaching skills, to connect across the disciplines and to become involved in CTLS activities.

In response to the Provost's mandate to investigate alternative systems for course evaluation, the CTLS has proposed a new model of administration that involves moving responsibility for programming and production to Instructional Information Technology Services (IITS). The Centre would continue to be involved on three levels: content of course evaluation; policies regarding implementation; and pedagogical follow-up with faculty on the interpretation of data. This new model is dependent on resolution of the budgetary allocation for course evaluation.

The CTLS has been actively involved in a number of technology-enhanced initiatives. They have coordinated the McConnell-Concordia pedagogy and technology project; launched a new

CTLS website, a storehouse of information and resources; developed a video series featuring exemplary Concordia faculty; organized a teleconference with the Institute in Management and Community Development; delivered "show and tell" workshops featuring demonstrations of how faculty are using technology to enhance student learning; offered a new 5-day course design workshop offered in collaboration with colleagues from McGill and Simon Fraser University that is tailored to model the meaningful use of technology; and collaborated with the CSLP on a research and development proposal to support faculty in using technology to meet the breadth of ability among Concordia students.

The strengths of the CTLS programs suggest that the Centre is well positioned to take more of a leadership role in supporting the University's vision to strengthen teaching excellence. In the coming years, the CTLS will continue to explore how it can best provide customized support to the Faculties while providing centralized services to faculty, part-time instructors and a growing contingent of graduate teaching assistants. In assessing the Centre's many accomplishments over the past 3 years, summarized below, two main areas need immediate attention: the allocation of appropriate resources to enable the CTLS to go beyond the delivery of core services, and the active involvement of the CTLS in strengthening the commitment to teaching excellence and translating this into concrete achievements. Rebuilding Concordia as a first-class comprehensive university is a significant goal for us all.

### **Highlights of CTLS Achievements (2001-2004)**

- Offered 68 university-wide workshops with a total of 788 participants.
- Offered 19 departmental workshops for approximately 260 participants.
- Delivered customized orientations for 163 new faculty members in each of the four Faculties.
- Delivered 4 one-day workshops on university teaching for 82 part-time instructors from all Faculties.
- Hosted an annual luncheon for the Provost and a total of approximately 90 new faculty members.
- Featured in 14 articles in the Thursday Report, the ENCS Quarterly and the Concordia University and the Graduate Concordia University Magazines.
- Delivered annual workshop on university teaching for new faculty in ENCS. Developed a specialized Faculty Development Program for Dean Esmail that he now recommends in his letters of appointment
- Developed annual TA Orientation and workshop series. Approximately 230 TA's have received Professional Development certificates for attending the required sessions.
- Integrated technology into most of our workshops through the use of PowerPoint, modeling how to use animated text, images, sound, and video to articulate pedagogical themes.



- Offered series of “How-to” technology workshops on specific applications and organized “Show and Tell” workshops for faculty to demonstrate their own initiatives.
- Collaborated with the School of Graduate Studies on a graduate seminar in university teaching, to be delivered by the CTLS during 2004-2005; 30 students have registered and 35 are on the waiting list.
- Together with the CSLP, proposed an investigation into how to use technology to improve multi-level teaching.
- Initiated a survey of Chairs, using the findings to inform our work and build community.
- Developed *the New Faculty Starter's Kit* that includes a *New Teacher's Handbook* and online resources.
- Conducted a brief needs assessment with the Institute of Cooperative Studies, followed by an interactive workshop.
- Collaborated with the Institute in Management and Community Development, a coalition of local Black community organizations and the Quebec Ministry of Education to create a teleconference in May 2004.
- Collaborated with colleagues from McGill University and Simon Fraser University on a 5-day Course Design Workshop for Concordia instructors, to be offered in August 2004.
- On behalf of the University, CTLS coordinated the McConnell Project for transforming classroom-based teaching and learning through technology, and produced the final report and presentation for the Foundation.
- Launched the new CTLS website, a storehouse of information related to student learning and faculty development. Approximately 2-3000 users visit the site each month.
- Developed *Teaching Dialogues*, a video series featuring exemplary Concordia faculty members as they reflect on their teaching. This series is available on our website.
- Launched the *Teaching and Learning Practicum*, a semester-long program for new faculty. First cohort showed dramatic improvements in their course evaluations.
- Hosted speaker series “Lessons Learned & Still Learning”, featuring 3M Award Winners from across Canada.
- Delivered two Instructional Skills workshops for 12 instructors from Dawson College.
- Collaborated with IITS on the implementation of a new course evaluation system.
- Formed teaching committees in ENCS and JMSB, helping to develop new guidelines for the JMSB Distinguished Teaching Award.
- Interviewed 151 new hires in 2002 for a Needs Assessment conducted with the Office of Research.

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## Introduction

*"While the peer support system provides most university professors with well understood role models for research, the resources for the cultivation of good teaching are considerably more elusive and require explicit internal support.*

*The Teaching and Learning Services Centre serves this need."*

Dr. Fred Szabo, Mathematics and Statistics

The Centre for Teaching and Learning Services (CTLS) can contribute significantly in raising the University's profile as a first-class comprehensive teaching and research institution. We need to continuously support our faculty in their efforts to prepare students, at all levels, to apply their newly acquired knowledge to real world situations. Challenges do exist: new content knowledge, a diverse student population, changing institutional and societal contexts all make teaching and learning increasingly complex. In addition, funding constraints make effective use of educational resources paramount. Within this context, it is imperative not to compromise sound educational practices and the integrity of the University and its programs and services. With this goal in mind, we have completed a preliminary review of CTLS activities that will not only lead to better utilization of our existing resources, but contribute to the ongoing discussions, initiated by the Provost, on measures to renew Concordia's commitment to excellence in teaching.

This report describes and analyzes the current teaching development services offered by the Centre, highlights new products and initiatives, and makes recommendations for improvement. It is organized around the seven main objectives of the CTLS 3-year Academic Development Plan (2001-2004) which has been extended by two years and aligned with the priorities of the University:

1. Consult with the Provost, Deans, Chairs and Directors of other service units to ensure that the **CTLS planning process** is in congruence with current and emerging issues and to develop new ways of working together towards the goal of community building.
2. Strengthen core **teaching development services** to facilitate the improvement and renewal efforts of full-time and part-time faculty members to meet the needs of a changing student population.
3. Increase **support for new faculty** to contribute towards their immediate teaching effectiveness and participation in the Concordia community.
4. Increase **support for graduate students** to help them as they prepare for new responsibilities as teaching assistants and instructors.
5. Provide leadership for the new **course evaluation** system to assist in achieving University-wide standards for personnel decisions and teaching improvement.

6. Advance pedagogically sound **technology-enhanced initiatives** that provide opportunities for faculty members to learn from each other across institutional boundaries and to yield new ideas and insights.
7. Promote **teaching development services at Concordia** towards the goal of achieving a first class comprehensive university.

## **1. Particulars of the Centre**

Before proceeding, we provide particulars of the Centre as background information: history and mandate, organizational structure, operating budget, and the CTLS planning process.

### **1.1 History and mandate**

Established in 1974, the CTLS is one of the longest-standing teaching development units in North America. Like our sister units and university teaching in general, we have been greatly undervalued historically. Our move in August 2001 to the Administration Building on the Loyola campus gave us hope for a renewed commitment to teaching development services. It provided us with the opportunity to be proud of our facilities, to set up a library of teaching resources and a seminar room equipped with a computer, a data projector, a white board and video equipment.

The Centre's mandate is to support the teaching mission of the University by providing instructional improvement programs and resources that promote excellence in teaching. We offer opportunities for faculty and graduate students to enhance their teaching skills and to explore new approaches to teaching and learning. We keep up-to-date with current developments in the field of higher education and demonstrate how the application of proven innovative strategies can enhance student learning. Underlying this mandate is the notion that effective teaching is a skill that can be developed with the proper support from colleagues, administrators and faculty development specialists.

*"I have sat on the CTLS Advisory Board for three years. This has given me the opportunity to see first-hand the creativity, diligence and dedication of the staff. I am struck that such a small group of people has such a large role to fulfill in the teaching mission of Concordia. Despite their small size, I think they provide an excellent service."*

Dr. Linda Dyer, Management

## **1.2 Organizational structure**

Reporting to the Provost, the Centre is staffed by a Director and four support staff. A CTLS Advisory Board also provides essential links with the Concordia community. Below are brief descriptions of this organizational structure.

The *Director* (Olivia Rovinescu) is responsible for general managerial tasks associated with securing and allocating human and financial resources, strategic planning, overseeing course evaluation, and representing the Centre on various committees. The position also entails the planning and delivery of faculty development services: individual and departmental consultations and workshops, orientations for new faculty and teaching assistants, and the new program on university teaching for Ph.D. students.

The *Teaching Consultant* (Janette Barrington) provides teaching development services to faculty and graduate students. She is responsible for the new 5-day course design workshop, the CTLS video project, and collaboration with the CSLP on research into various aspects of faculty development. She also assists in strategic planning and writing the annual report. This is a new permanent position opened in 2003 to replace the Assistant Director's position.

The *Instructional Developer* (Marcy Slapcoff) supports the planning and delivery of workshops, TA orientation, and the Teaching and Learning Practicum. She designs instructional resources (print and web-based), manages the CTLS web site, evaluates Centre activities, and specializes in the investigation and use of new technologies. This is a contract position (4 days a week) that is essential to the ongoing provision of quality services.

The *Office Manager* (Eve Girard, presently on maternity leave and replaced by Joyce Stempkowski) provides administrative support: designs and distributes workshop advertisements, registers and provides information for participants, books space and equipment, organizes and orders materials. She administers the budget, maintains records, compiles statistical reports, and ensures the smooth operation of the office.

The *Course Evaluation Coordinator* (Linda Church) is responsible for all facets of administering course evaluation: notifies departments of policies and procedures, distributes questionnaires, and compiles statistical reports. The course evaluation position hires several casual employees and works closely with a programmer from IITS (Alphonse Roaldi).

The *CTLS Advisory Committee* consists of five full-time faculty members (two from A&S, one from JMSB, one from ENCS, and one from FA), one representative from CUPFA and one from SGS. Based on their commitment to the mandate of the Centre, members are appointed for a two-year term by the Provost, on the recommendation of the CTLS Director. Committee members help to identify relevant issues and needs across the university and also serve as a

source of expertise, advice, and political support for the work of the Centre. Membership for the 2003-2004 academic year includes: Dr. Miranda D'Amico, Linda Kay, Dr. Linda Dyer, Dr. Brian Foss, Dr. Peter Grogono, Judith Grad, and Dr. Ted Stathopoulos.

### ***1.3 Operating budget***

The CTLS has an operating budget of \$272,362 for faculty development services and \$56,421 for administering course evaluation (see Appendix B for the 2004-2005 budget allotment). In 2001, the Teaching Enhancement Fund was permanently re-directed to the CTLS faculty development budget in order to help us enhance our core services to meet the needs of a growing body of new faculty and students. In April 2003, the Provost further approved that the excess funds remaining in the Teaching Enhancement Account (\$122,300) be used for 3 years of enrichment activities (see Appendix C). This augmentation in budget allowed CTLS to hire an Instructional Developer in 2003.

### ***1.4 CTLS planning process***

Objective 1: Consult with the Provost, Deans, Chairs and Directors of other service units to ensure that the CTLS planning process is in congruence with current and emerging issues and to develop new ways of working together towards the goal of community building.

CTLS has engaged in an extensive consultation process to ensure that our strategic plan remains consistent with actual and emerging needs. This has involved meeting on a regular basis with the Provost, the Deans, new faculty members, Directors of service departments that impact on the work of the Centre, and representatives from CUPFA and the external community. As a consequence, the CTLS has been invited to participate in meetings with the Chairs and the Associate Deans in ENCS and JMSB to discuss ways in which we can meet the teaching development needs of these two Faculties.

A new initiative in the Spring of 2004 has been to survey Chairs to better understand the teaching needs of each department so that our services and next academic plan are connected to real and current issues at Concordia. We also took this opportunity to promote our services. To date we have met with 15 Chairs. We were very positively received and in many cases have been invited to engage in follow-up activities with the department. These meetings have enabled us to forge strong collaborative relationships and to customize our teaching development services. A summary of preliminary findings and the CTLS response is included in Table 1. We will discuss with the Provost a coordinated approach to address the main challenges raised on common standards for assessment, the breadth of ability among students, and teaching large classes.

**TABLE 1: CTLS SURVEY OF CHAIRS SPRING 2004**

General Description	Findings	Matching CTLS services to needs
<p><b>Participants &amp; methodology:</b></p> <p>The CTLS Director and Teaching Consultant conducted individual interviews with 15 Chairs from the following departments: Accountancy, Biology, Building, Civil and Environmental, Chemistry, Computer Science Decision Sciences and Management Information Systems, Finance, History, Mathematics, Mechanical Engineering, Philosophy, Political Science, Psychology, Sociology and Anthropology, Theology. Responses to questions asked by the Director were recorded.</p> <p><b>Objectives:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To increase familiarization with Chairs about our services in order to help them better integrate new faculty.</li> <li>• To better understand teaching needs of faculty so that our services are better connected to real and current issues at Concordia.</li> <li>• To understand the criteria used for judging teaching dossiers so that our dossier workshop and consultations are aligned with departmental standards.</li> </ul>	<p><b>The most important challenges related to student learning:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment issues (11)</li> <li>• Breadth of ability among students (9)</li> <li>• Teaching large classes (9)</li> </ul> <p><i>Other challenges:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Language issues – thinking conceptually and critically (7)</li> <li>• More support for faculty to keep up-to-date with technology (4)</li> <li>• Interpreting course evaluations (3)</li> <li>• General raising of the bar, you have to be excellent at everything (2)</li> </ul> <p><i>Perceived role for CTLS:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase presence through departmental meetings (11)</li> <li>• Create synergy &amp; momentum, promote awareness &amp; get people talking (6)</li> <li>• Improve quality of part-time instructors – part-time course evaluation completely useless (4)</li> <li>• Organize working lunch to share generic problems of Chairs across the disciplines – what works, what doesn't work (3)</li> <li>• Change the climate around the evaluation of teaching (2)</li> <li>• Be more visible at Faculty events (2)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Challenge 1: Assessment issues</b>  <b>Description of problem:</b> standards for an A, B, C, and D are unclear leading to conflicts, grade inflation, and plagiarism.  <b>Recommendation:</b> Explore the provision of policy that clarify assessment standards across the University.  <b>CTLS Response:</b> Review present standards with Provost. CTLS to continue providing workshops on developing departmental assessment criteria.</p> <p><b>Challenge 2: Breadth of ability among students</b>  <b>Description of problem:</b> Bi-polar distribution of students, mix of majors and non-majors making teaching difficult, leading to lack of satisfaction with teaching and low teaching evaluations.  <b>Recommendation:</b> Tools, training required for teaching students with different abilities.  <b>CTLS Response:</b> MULTI Project (described in Section 6.8).</p> <p><b>Challenge 3: Teaching large classes</b>  <b>Description of problem:</b> Discipline, first year courses, conducting discussions, helping students think critically and applying knowledge.  <b>Recommendation:</b> Explore the provision of teaching development grants for faculty to redesign courses targeting large first-year classes.  <b>CTLS Response:</b> Signal to Provost the need for funds to enhance the teaching of large classes. CTLS to provide departmental workshops.</p>



## 2. Core teaching development services

Objective 2: Strengthen core teaching development services to facilitate the improvement and renewal efforts of full-time and part-time faculty members to meet the needs of a changing student population.

Strengthening our core teaching development services continues to be the Centre's main priority. Over the past triennium we have done this in a number of different ways. The CTLS one-on-one consultations continue to be successful for both new and experienced faculty, as well as our university-wide workshop series and intensive Instructional Skills Workshop. These services have been further augmented with departmental workshops that address specific teaching issues, customized workshops for new part-time instructors, and invited guest speakers.

### 2.1 One-on-one consultations

The CTLS provides three types of one-on-one consultations: referrals by Chairs or Deans of faculty experiencing difficulties in their teaching; consultations self-initiated by faculty members following participation in a workshop or as a result of proactive work on our part; faculty wanting to make innovative changes to their course design. The approach is collegial and focused on problem solving. It involves problem definition, experimentation in the classroom, and reflection.

Upon request we will observe instructors during lectures and/or videotape them to help these instructors become aware of classroom behaviours. One-on-one consultations have positive results in helping faculty examine their own practice, analyzing and comparing their teaching strategies with alternatives, and carrying out action research to create change.

*"I think the greatest impact your Centre had on my teaching was in helping me to learn how to shift how I prepare for classes depending on the size of the group... Also very helpful were concrete tools that your centre provided that I used in that class and in many subsequent classes since. These suggestions helped me to organize my classes in a more structured manner... The benefits of this have continued to impact my teaching even in smaller classes."*

Dr. Christine Jamieson, Theology

The consultation process is an integral part of the work we do, for it allows us to address the particular teaching concerns of individual faculty members in depth over longer

periods of time. Consultations vary in length and may consist of anywhere from one to eight meetings over a span of one to three years. CTLS staff also conduct telephone and e-mail consultations on specific short-term issues. We find that e-mail consultations are increasing.

Fifty three consultations were conducted over the triennium, mostly with tenure-track faculty members in A&S. A breakdown of participation in one-on-one consultations by Faculty is provided in Table 2 (These figures represent the number of individuals who engaged in this service, not the number of meetings, phone conversations, email exchanges or classroom observations for each person.)

**Table 2: Participation in one-on-one consultations by Faculty**

Consultations Year	Faculty				Total
	A&S	ENCS	FA	JSMB	
2001-2002	10	1	3	0	14
2002-2003	9	2	1	1	13
2003-2004	12	3	5	6	26
Total	31	6	9	7	53

There is perhaps a need to increase our impact in ENCS and JSMB in the future. We need a timely referral system to detect problem cases early because some clients seek our services too late in the tenure and contract renewal process. CTLS staff will also try whenever possible to work closely with department Chairs of those faculty members experiencing problems to develop an approach which is aligned with departmental norms. Exit interviews with faculty members who did not get tenure indicate that working with Chairs would align our advice more specifically with expectations. In cases where faculty members experience severe problems, a triangulation approach could be put into place to include the department Chair and a CTLS consultant observing classes and meeting with the faculty member, as well as collecting data on student perceptions. For the first time this year, the CTLS Director worked with a peer consultant appointed by a department to help a faculty member from another department within the same Faculty. Because this consultation was regarded by the participants as a positive experience, we will pursue such arrangements again.

In order to promote our consultation service, we will continue to meet with Chairs to familiarize them with this service, and to discuss the kinds of problems that faculty members experience and how we can best work together.

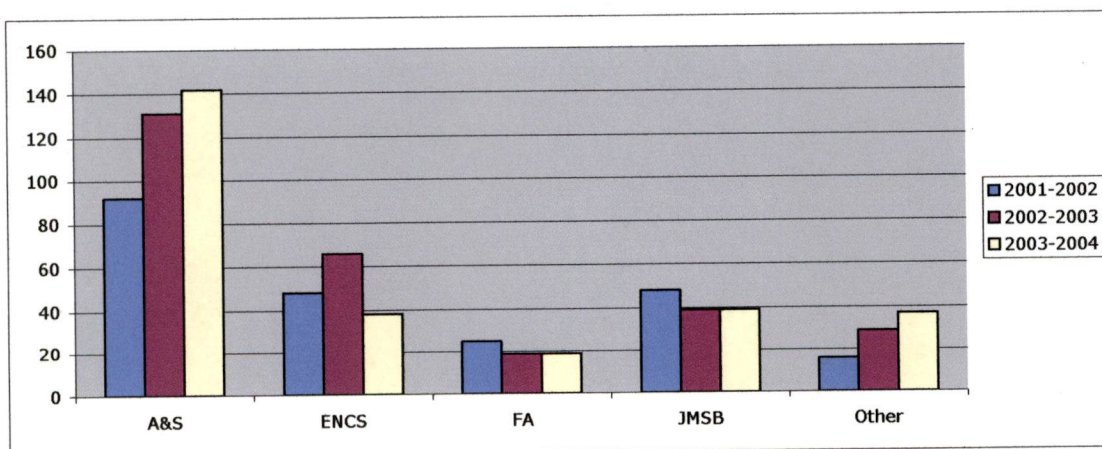
## 2.2 University-wide workshop series

*“In my first year of teaching, I focussed mainly on the academic aspects of preparing the course and less on ensuring that the students had a comfortable learning environment. The workshops offered by the Centre for Teaching and Learning Services helped me develop ways of achieving this latter goal.”*

Dr. Emma Despland, Biology

Faculty development workshops are the Centre’s traditional mode of delivering pedagogical training. They bring together teachers from all disciplines to learn from education specialists and from each other. Since we recognize the importance of faculty ownership in designing and delivering faculty development, we invite experienced faculty to propose, design and deliver some of these workshops. These workshops range from: university-wide workshops on current issues and innovative strategies for teaching and learning; intensive Instructional Skills Workshops; customized workshops for departments and new part-time instructors; and guest speakers.

A breakdown of participation in CTLS workshops (excluding departmental workshops) by Faculty is provided in Figure 1. The slight decrease in participation by ENCS faculty is due to there being too few new faculty members to warrant a program in university teaching for the 2003-2004 academic year. They are invited to the one this summer.



**Figure 1: Participation in university-wide workshop series by faculty**

A total of 68 university-wide workshops were offered during the triennium, with a total of 788 participants (see Appendix D for a complete list of workshops and participation statistics). Participation has increased over the three years – mainly in the area of workshops dealing with technology themes. Most written feedback reports satisfaction with our workshops, making particular mention of valuable opportunities to interact with

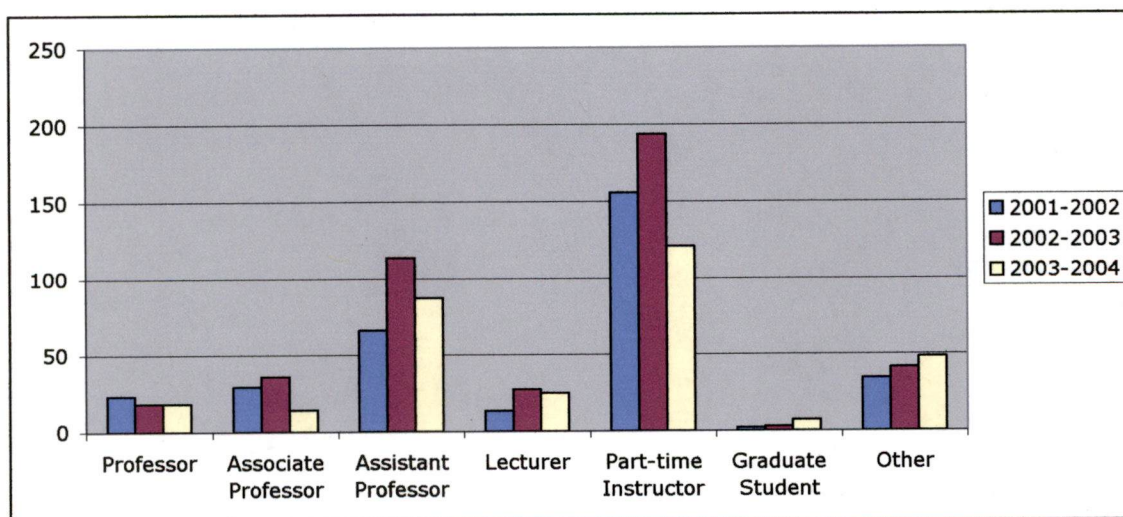
colleagues from other departments in the University. On a scale of 1 to 5 (with 5 referring to “completely satisfied”), the average rating of CTLS workshops by participants is 4.6.

*“I have attended several courses given by this Centre (as an individual and as a Department member) and results were impressive: attendance at my courses increased, students have been satisfied. ... I have found pleasure in transferring my knowledge, not to mention that I have received tenure and several merits following evaluation of my professional performance.”*

Dr. Maria Elektorowicz, Building, Civil & Environmental Engineering

A breakdown of participation in CTLS events by career position (including orientations but excluding departmental workshops) is shown in Figure 2 below. Part-time instructors continue to take the most advantage of our services, thereby confirming our sense that they would benefit from increased specialized activities and resources.

Given the new Provost’s stated interest in increasing the international academic profile of the University, we anticipate arranging more specialized types of training in the future on issues such as: voice projection for non-native speakers, intercultural perspectives on assessing group work, intercultural communication, accent reduction and other topics that would help prepare international faculty members for teaching at Concordia as well as enable all faculty to become more sensitive to the needs of international students. Accent reduction workshops require one-on-one sessions with specialists in speech therapy so further funding must be sought to support such services.



**Figure 2: Participation in CTLS events by career position**  
(Including orientations and excluding departmental workshops)



### **2.3 Instructional Skills Workshop**

The Instructional Skills Workshop (ISW) is an intensive 18-hour laboratory approach to the improvement of teaching and learning. ISW participants work closely with peers to improve each other's teaching. They practice a variety of instructional strategies and techniques, increase their knowledge of self as teacher, and connect with colleagues from a range of disciplines. They learn to recognize the importance of establishing a positive learning environment, to consider the variable needs of learners, to construct practical lesson plans, to give and receive constructive feedback, to use questions and other basic techniques to test for learning, and to experiment with technology in the delivery of a lesson. Feedback from participants is always extremely positive.

*"I used the information provided in the ISW and began to link the material to the students' personal experience and integrate more exercises of varying lengths into the classes. The success of these changes is clearly demonstrated in my course evaluations."*

Dr. Eva Pomeroy, Applied Human Science

In keeping with the spirit of its original mandate, the CTLS still occasionally provides workshops and consultations for other educational institutions and community organizations. This practice serves three important functions: it allows us to network with educators at feeder institutions; the fees for services help to offset some of our operating costs; and it builds Concordia's reputation as an institution that demonstrates its respect for teachers by providing them with first-rate professional development opportunities. Several CEGEPs have used our services, in some cases with follow-up sessions. Dawson College in particular has requisitioned our 3-day Instructional Skills Workshop twice this year with plans for two more workshops next year. These workshops are always very highly rated by participants.

*"I, like the rest of the participants, felt great about participating in the workshop as it rekindled my desire for teaching, reinvigorated my commitment to students, refuelled my enthusiasm for pedagogy, and endowed me with more pedagogical tools."*

Worku Abera, Economics, Dawson College

### **2.4 Departmental workshops**

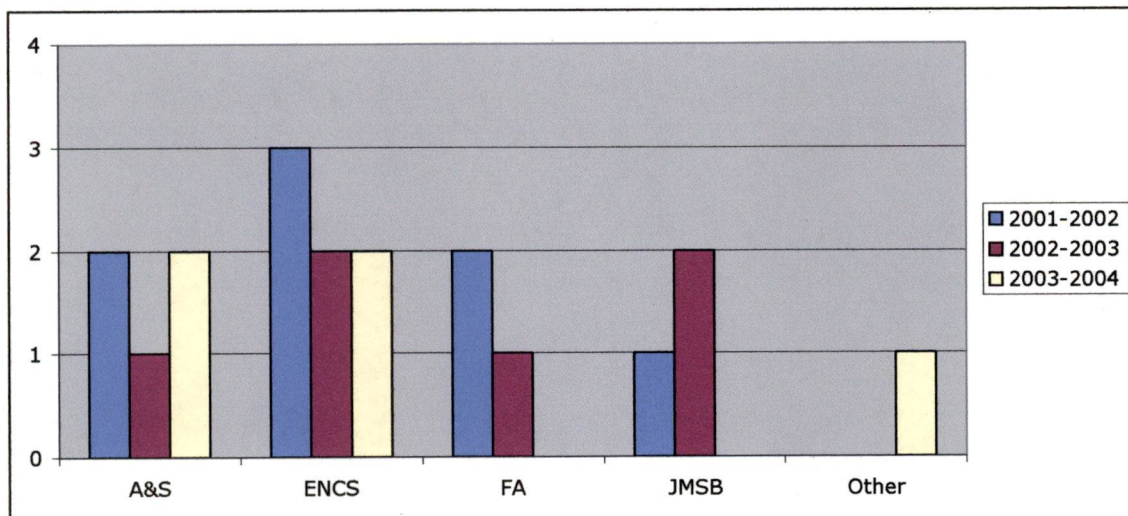
The Centre has been collaborating with various departments to provide customized discipline-specific, just-in-time workshops for full and part-time faculty. This initiative requires that we design specially tailored sessions in collaboration with experienced faculty members. Over the course of this reporting period, there were approximately 260

participants in 19 department workshops on various subjects. For example, we have conducted presentations on grading and assessment, responding to written work, teaching large classes, dealing with problem students, collaborative learning, teaching with technology, critical thinking, active learning, and the pedagogical use of PowerPoint.

*“The Center for Teaching and Learning at Concordia has been instrumental and inspirational in getting a number of professors in the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering to think of teaching as a profession and take some significant steps to improve their professionalism in the area of education.”*

Dr. Nawwaf Kharma, Electrical and Computer Engineering

The number of departmental workshops by Faculty is represented in Figure 3. Departments to which we have been invited include: Journalism, Philosophy, Theatre, Theology, Sociology and Anthropology, Building, Civil and Environmental Engineering, Electrical and Computer Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, Computer Science, Design Art, Creative Arts Therapies, Marketing, and Management.



**Figure 3: Number of departmental workshops by Faculty**

*“The CTLS has also staged discipline-specific seminars for the Department of Journalism the last three years, which I have attended and profited from. ... I have found the staff at the CTLS to be very helpful and receptive to my own particular challenges.”*

Dr. Mike Gasher, Journalism

We anticipate offering less university-wide and more department-specific workshops. We will be keeping in touch with Chairs who would like CTLS to come on a regular basis to departmental meetings to participate in discussions on issues related to teaching

and to deliver presentations on topics of interest to the department. In order to boost interest in departmental workshops, we are advertising "CTLS-on-the-Road" workshops in our flyer and on the CTLS web site. We also propose organizing a Provost's showcase of good practices in teaching in higher education. Such an event would celebrate the achievements of individual professors while promoting a sense of pride in good teaching. It would also communicate to new faculty and the community at large that the development of teaching skills is seen as a worthwhile endeavour and a career-long goal.

*Ms. Rovinescu quickly grasped the particular problems faced by the Computer Science Department, and she was able to design an excellent workshop that was very well tailored to our needs."*

Dr. Gosta Grahne, Computer Science

In our effort to work more collaboratively with other service units, we conducted a first of a kind consultation with the staff at the Institute for Cooperative Education. After consulting with the Director and the staff, we designed a workshop on presentation skills that provided staff members with the opportunity to conduct a presentation and receive feedback from both CTLS and Coop staff.

### **2.5 Customized workshops for part-time instructors**

Although competent in their areas of expertise, part-time faculty are not always prepared to address the full range of student needs. They often work during the day and so feel disconnected from the university support system. For this reason, CTLS has collaborated with CUPFA for the past two years in offering pedagogical training scheduled during the week and on weekends. These one-day sessions focus on key aspects of course planning, effective teaching and learning practices, and methods of evaluating the students and instructors. Four one-day sessions were organized during 2001-2003, with 89 part-time teachers attending from A&S, ENCS and JMSB. Participants were highly appreciative of the University's attention to their teaching needs as well as the President of CUPFA.

*"We are very appreciative of the efforts of CTLS to meet our own objectives to improving the teaching and learning services the Association emphasizes with its own members."*

Maria Peluso, President of CUPFA

### **2.6 Guest speakers**

Every year the CTLS holds special events that bring faculty members together to talk about teaching. In 2003 we hosted the first *3M Teaching Award Speaker Series*, in

collaboration with Dr. Arshad Ahmad, Associate Professor in Finance, and Coordinator of the Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education (STLHE) and 3M Canada's Teaching Fellowship Program, inviting three highly accomplished professors from across Canada to Concordia to deliver original, thought-provoking workshops:

- *Sizing up Our Favourite Teaching Habits* by Michael Moore, an English professor at Wilfrid Laurier University.
- *Still Passionate About Teaching After All These Years* by Clarissa Green, Associate Professor at the University of British Columbia.
- *The Search for Rhythm(s): A Basis for teacher Self-Assessment* by Alex Fancy, Professor of Modern Languages at Mount Allison University.

We also arranged for a one-day workshop on *Problem-Based Learning (PBL)* facilitated by Dr. Yves Maufette, Professor of Ecology at the Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM). These special events were well attended and highly rated by participants. We find that experienced faculty in particular enjoy hearing from experts outside the University.

To increase the teaching resources available to faculty, we are planning to encourage the designation of Teaching Fellows in each of the four Faculties to help us plan and facilitate future events. Research shows that faculty members who are trained as facilitators make a positive impact on the culture of an institution. Those who have been identified as being highly successful and sufficiently interested in co-facilitating should be recognized and called upon to contribute to the training of others. However, some means of rewarding such participation must be explored.

### **3. Increased support for new faculty**

Objective 3: Increase support for new faculty to contribute towards their immediate teaching effectiveness and participation in the Concordia community of teaching excellence.

Support for new faculty was identified as the main priority in our 2001-2004 Academic Plan. An unprecedented number of new full-time faculty members arrived at Concordia during this period. The CTLS has addressed this priority through the following initiatives: customized orientations in each Faculty; a social luncheon event to celebrate their first year experience; a new intensive Teaching and Learning Practicum designed for those in need of specialized support to improve teaching skills; a customized program



on university teaching for new faculty in ENCS; a new faculty starter kit; and a follow-up needs assessment.

### **3.1 Customized orientations**

*"The orientation to new faculty was also very helpful as it provided the first and most comprehensive overview of the university and each faculty."*

Dr. Catherine Mulligan, Building, Civil and Environmental Engineering

Traditionally, new faculty orientation was a university-wide introduction to "who's who" that brought people together across the disciplines and culminated in a barbeque to which family members were invited. Since the number of new hires has risen dramatically, we customized our design in collaboration with each of the four Faculties. We convened focus groups/organizing committees in ENCS, FA and JMSB to help us plan one-day events. New and experienced faculty members participated both in the focus groups and in the planning and delivery of the sessions.

ENCS now offers a one-day orientation that includes a talk by the Dean, a presentation by CTLS on teaching skills, a panel discussion with experienced ENCS faculty, a session on the code of academic conduct and a hands-on session on using technology. FA invites their new faculty to a half-day orientation that includes a presentation by CTLS, presentations from services within FA, a panel discussion with experienced faculty members, and a discussion with the Dean. JMSB invites all new faculty including ETA's and LTA's to a one-day orientation to university teaching that includes a talk by the Dean and the Associate Dean, an interactive session on teaching by CTLS, and a panel discussion with experienced JMSB faculty. After two consecutive years of one-day events similar to the above, A&S now organizes their own orientation that addresses both teaching and research, to which the Director of CTLS is invited to make a presentation on teaching services available to new faculty. This prompted us to extend our teaching resources with a New Teacher's Handbook (described below).

Participation at new faculty orientation in each of the Faculties over the triennium is provided in Table 3. Participants have consistently expressed their satisfaction with this service.

**Table 3: Participation in new faculty orientations by Faculty**

Orientations Year	Faculty				Total
	A&S	ENCS	FA	JSMB	
2001-2002	23	12	2	8	45
2002-2003	21	25	16	26	88
2003-2004	26	N/A	7	7	40
Total	70	37	25	41	173

Because they are not invited to New Faculty Orientations, nor are they members of CUPFA, many LTA's and ETA's do not find out about our services until late in their appointments. We suggest the following measures to correct this situation and emphasize quality teaching across the university. Orientation for new faculty could include all new LTA's and ETA's (this is the case in JMSB). Alternatively, it may be possible to offer a one-day pedagogical training session concurrent with their initial teaching contract and include the New Teacher's Handbook and other essential information on teaching support services with their contracts. Participation in teaching development activities could also be emphasized on recruitment and established as a criterion by department Chairs in the contract renewal process.

### **3.2 New faculty luncheon**

At the end of each academic year, the CTLS organizes a social luncheon for new faculty members so they may connect with colleagues from across the University. This luncheon provides the opportunity for them to share their first year experiences and discuss any issues with the Provost. It also provides the Centre with the opportunity to elicit feedback on their perceived needs. Approximately 90 new faculty members have participated in this event over the triennium. The Director of the Office of Research is also invited. More senior administrators and key support staff could be invited to hear firsthand how they might serve their new colleagues better. We believe social events like these are indispensable for creating a Concordia community of teaching excellence.

### **3.3 Teaching and Learning Practicum (TLP)**

*"I would unreservedly recommend the TLP to any faculty member regardless of their level of experience or seniority; it's a highly worthwhile opportunity to take a long, honest look at exactly who we are, what we project, and what we can ultimately achieve when we step into the classroom."*

Dr. Matthew Soar, Communication Studies

We have initiated a new program specifically targeting new faculty called the Teaching and Learning Practicum (TLP). This innovative approach to faculty development provides a creative and confidential environment in which faculty members can share experiences and anecdotes and receive constructive support independent of their departmental affiliation. Faculty meet in small groups with CTLS personnel throughout the academic year. They practice their teaching, have classes video taped, implement new strategies with students, visit each other's classes, collect data from their students in the form of mid-term evaluations, analyze this data and discuss it with members of the group, and share reports on changes made based on the suggestions received. The program involves faculty members in becoming part of an interdisciplinary learning community, working together to improve their lesson design, delivery and course evaluations.

*Personally, I have seen a great improvement in my own teaching experience/skills. This fact has been further substantiated by my course evaluations, as well. During the workshop and beyond, I restructured my lecture notes as per suggestions/tips gathered in the TLP workshop. The midterm evaluation form, which I prepared keeping specific personal concerns in mind, has been very much appreciated by students and some of them mentioned that they admired that I was concerned about their learning objectives and experiences.*

Dr. Pernendu Sinha, Electrical and Computer Engineering

The evaluation of the first cohort of participants (2003-2004) was extremely positive with participants citing major improvements in their course evaluations over the first year as well as their own general satisfaction with teaching. We will continue to follow up with these individuals and with the participants of the second cohort that began in May 2004. We plan adding new groups beginning in December 2004 and May 2005.

### **3.4 Program for new faculty in ENCS**

Dean Esmail recommends in his letters of appointment to new faculty that they participate in a Faculty Development Program. In December 2001, the program was designed as a three-day intensive workshop that ten new faculty attended. This program focused on student learning, course and lesson planning, discipline-specific teaching techniques, and technology applications in the classroom. Workshops in this program were delivered by a team of experts in engineering education, recipients of teaching awards, as well as teaching consultants from CTLS.

*"This 3-day intensive workshop was by far the most helpful event I have attended. Although I am not a fan of interactive teaching, it was used quite effectively in this workshop. ... As a new faculty member I have found the services provided by the CTLS to be extremely helpful and would definitely recommend that more faculty members attend their workshops."*

Dr. Rocco Di Girolamo, Electrical and Computer Engineering

In December 2002, the program was re-designed as a two-day intensive workshop that eleven new faculty attended. It has since evolved into a program that includes a one-day orientation, as well as individual consultations with all new faculty members, participation in the Centre's regularly offered workshops, and departmental workshops facilitated by CTLS staff. The diversity of this approach recognizes that new professors have different levels of teaching experience and thus different needs in relation to their teaching. There are also two half-day events planned that the Dean and senior faculty will attend to establish a new culture of teaching excellence in ENCS.

### **3.5 New faculty starter kit**

As part of our commitment to new faculty, the CTLS has developed a new faculty starter kit that includes useful tools for teaching: course syllabus and lesson plan templates, a self-assessment inventory of principles for teaching in higher education, information on services that support faculty in their teaching, and a *New Teacher's Handbook* of (see sample package of CTLS materials included with this report). The first edition contains: a series of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) regarding teaching and learning at Concordia; a list of key resources on-campus; and selected references. By summarizing some of the key findings in faculty development literature and providing practical strategies for teaching, the handbook aims to ease new faculty members through their first semesters in the classroom. In the future, we will add new FAQs to the handbook as new concerns are identified by new faculty and department Chairs. To reinforce the information presented, we will match each FAQ with CTLS-authored tools and templates, videos of Concordia professors discussing and/or demonstrating the topic at hand. The new faculty starter kit also has an online component: a selection of information, tips and tools available on the CTLS website.

### **3.6 Needs assessment**

In 2002, in response to the Provost and Concordia's faculty renewal campaign, we initiated a collaborative relationship with the Office of Research to develop a new Mentorship Program. The goal of this collaboration was to integrate within one professional development program the two sister dimensions of scholarly life, namely,

teaching and research. To assess the actual needs of new faculty, CTLS staff and the Mentorship Program Coordinator interviewed 151 new hires: tenure-track, ETA's and LTA's. The interviews revealed that the majority are well integrated within their departments, although they would be highly interested in meeting and collaborating with faculty members from other departments. The results showed that 62% face major time constraints in managing their teaching and research careers and 39% describe teaching as a major challenge, citing plagiarism and lack of grading policies as two of the main issues of concern.

Despite some initial interest in the Mentorship Program, it did not meet with universal approval and thus was abandoned. However, the information gleaned during the needs assessment was critical for the CTLS: it enabled us to know first-hand what issues new faculty face and to respond appropriately. Follow-up interviews were conducted with the new faculty of 2003-2004 to find out if they were experiencing any difficulties with their teaching and to remind them of the Centre's activities and resources.

#### **4. Increased support for graduate students**

Objective 4: Increase support for graduate students to help them as they prepare for new responsibilities as teaching assistants and instructors.

We see the teaching assistant (TA) role as important in opening a communication link between professors and students. Orientation and workshops designed specifically for TA's is now a core CTLS teaching development service. As part of a new collaborative relationship with the School of Graduate Studies, we are offering a program this year in university teaching for PhD students. We see this as an opportunity for graduate students to connect across the disciplines and to become involved in CTLS activities. It is also a way to build interest and a knowledge base in university teaching. The interest in CTLS training in this regard has been growing steadily over the last three years.

##### **4.1 TA orientation and workshops**

Each year, approximately 100 TA's receive a professional development certificate after attending the CTLS TA orientation and workshop series. The event is designed to inform TA's of their rights and responsibilities, to introduce them to principles of instruction and to provide them with some concrete tips and strategies. To provide students with a complete picture of what to expect, the CTLS invites representatives from across the university to make presentations or facilitate workshops (Graduate Studies, Student

Affairs, Office of Rights and Responsibilities, Advocacy and Support Services, the Library, former TA's and current professors).

In the past, the orientation and workshops were stretched out over a week but in response to feedback from participants, we have redesigned the format and this year the entire event will take place on one day. The revised program leads TA's through a learning process, starting with the introduction of their new roles and responsibilities and continuing with sessions that focus on discipline-specific topics where they can address the particularities of being a teaching assistant in their field. The Concordia TA Handbook has also been made available on the CTLS web site.

#### **4.2 Customized TA Training**

Customized training was requested in Mechanical Engineering and Building, Civil and Environmental Engineering to prepare TA's with instructional and presentation skills.

*"These workshops were exceptionally well done and effective. They have permitted our Ph.D. students to not only give effective research presentations themselves but also to be more effective in their teaching functions."*

Dr. O.A. Pekau, Building, Civil and Environmental Engineering

CTLS was also asked by the Faculty of Fine Arts to provide a workshop for TA's who are responsible for facilitating tutorials for their large introductory course on "Visual and Performing Arts in Canada" that has over 600 students. The Dean's Office also asked us to provide classroom observations with detailed suggestions for all the TA's involved in this course. We also pilot tested our on-line discussion forum with this group.

#### **4.3 New Ph.D. seminar in university teaching**

CTLS has collaborated with the School of Graduate Studies on the development of a one-year program in university teaching for Ph.D. students at Concordia. The purpose is twofold: 1) to prepare students for an academic teaching career and 2) to ensure the quality of their teaching should they teach at Concordia.

Following consultations with SGS and Dr. Ellen Jacobs, Chair of the Department of Education, the program was initially proposed as a non-credit, cross-listed course for which students would get a notation on their transcripts once course requirements were met. The course was to include real experience in the classroom. This design proved difficult to implement in ENCS, where we had received the greatest interest, due to the need for curriculum changes and a commitment to providing teaching opportunities for students. The program has since been re-designed as a series of seminars on teaching and

students. The program has since been re-designed as a series of seminars on teaching and course design combined with simulated teaching practice. The CTLS Director and Teaching Consultant will co-facilitate the seminars and guest speakers will be invited. The estimated time commitment for students is 31.5 hours in class with 20 hours for preparation of readings and assignments. Participants will receive a CTLS professional development certificate on completion of the program. Students will be charged a modest fee for materials.

This new program is being officially launched in the 2004-2005 academic year. It is already filled to capacity, with a registration limit of 30 and a waiting list of more than 30. Of those registered, 12 are from ENCS, 12 from A&S, 3 from FA and 2 from JMSB. We are encouraged by this immediate expression of interest in this new service.

## **5. Improved course evaluation system**

Objective 5: Provide leadership for the new course evaluation system to assist in achieving University-wide standards for personnel decisions and teaching improvement.

In July 1997 the CTLS received the mandate from the Provost to investigate alternative systems for administering course evaluation. This process entailed the reduction in the number of questionnaires to approximately one per faculty, the scanning of questionnaires and the selection of a new software system to analyze and process the data. In this section, we describe a proposed new model of administration for course evaluation, an online mid-course feedback questionnaire, and a comprehensive system for the evaluation of teaching.

### **5.1 Proposed new model of administration**

In 2004, the Director of CTLS submitted a proposal (which has not as yet been formally approved) for a new model of administration, one that can better support the need for more automation and standardization of operation. It was proposed that IITS be responsible for all aspects of programming and production and house the course evaluation operation and the CTLS be involved on three levels: content of course evaluation, policies regarding the implementation of course evaluation, and pedagogical follow-up with faculty. More specifically, the Director of IITS has agreed that as soon as space is available course evaluation will be moved to IITS where it can receive the on-going technical support that it requires. The CTLS will continue to provide assistance with the development of new questionnaires, make recommendations regarding the

information that should be present in the data fields determining what type of statistical information is appropriate, and respond to questions from faculty members on the interpretation of data. Even though the proposal has not been formally approved, this is the arrangement between IITS and CTLS for the past two years. A more formal relationship needs to be established that more clearly delineates responsibilities.

To achieve this new model of administration a permanent budget needs to be put into place that adequately reflects the real costs of implementing course evaluation at Concordia. For too long course evaluation has been allowed to carry an overage. An additional \$46,000 needs to be injected into the budget, especially now that all sectors of Arts and Science are on board (see budget allocation for 2004-2005 in Appendix B). This budget does not take into account the sub-contracted programming costs incurred by IITS or the on-going computer support from IITS.

The CTLS will closely monitor the accuracy of the new course evaluation system to ensure that results are absolutely trustworthy. We will also elicit feedback from the Concordia community on the usefulness of the statistical reports.

### ***5.2 On-line mid-course feedback***

The 1994 Report of the Task Force on the Evaluation of Teaching and the Teaching Dossier reports that research suggests global questions are the most appropriate to use for personnel decisions and specific questions are more appropriate for decisions about improving a course. By collecting all this information at the same time we deprive the professor of getting timely information about how to improve his/her teaching since results do not come back until well after the course has ended. In an attempt to provide faculty members with an opportunity to improve their teaching, CTLS and IITS have created an on-line mid-course feedback questionnaire that will be accessed on the CTLS web site. We are hopeful that these formative evaluations will help faculty members make changes during the semester and/or seek the help of CTLS early so as to make a difference in the learning of their students. The new online mid-course feedback questionnaire will be pilot tested in the fall of 2004 with volunteers from the CTLS course design workshop.

### ***5.3 Comprehensive system for the evaluation of teaching***

The evaluation of teaching is an aspect of tenure/promotion and merit decisions. Course evaluation questionnaires provide important and unique information about student perceptions and are used as an indicator of teaching effectiveness. The literature however suggests that they should only form part of a comprehensive system of faculty evaluation



(see Report of the Task Force on the Evaluation of Teaching and the Teaching Dossier, 1994). We have confronted many faculty members who have expressed confusion about the manner in which these evaluations are used in making personnel decisions. A university-wide discussion on these matters needs to take place and a document needs to be produced on the use of student ratings for personnel decisions.

## 6. Technology-enhanced initiatives

Objective 6: Advance pedagogically sound technology-enhanced initiatives that provide opportunities for faculty members to learn from each other across institutional boundaries and to yield new ideas and insights.

The CTLS' ability to achieve this objective was greatly enhanced by the funding received from the McConnell Family Foundation. The original aim of the McConnell project had been for the Centre to take an active role in emphasizing pedagogy and educational purpose in the use of new technologies. To this end, we have explored new ways of delivering our own messages: sophisticated PowerPoint presentations for CTLS workshops; a revamped website to guide navigation of the many resources on university teaching and learning available on the Internet; a video series that profiles Concordia faculty using innovative teaching strategies and technologies; and our own brand of technology-enhanced workshops.

We are also actively involved in a number of new initiatives. One is an experiment with video conferencing in community outreach in collaboration with Concordia's Institute in Management and Community Development. Another one is an inter-university project on course design that focuses on learning for the effective integration of technology in collaboration with the Centre for the Study of Learning and Performance (CSLP). A further one, also with the CSLP, is a proposed university-wide project on multi-level teaching that focuses on the use of technology as a tool for creating synergy across the university. The aim of these initiatives is to provide opportunities for faculty members to learn from each other across institutional boundaries and to yield new insights and innovative ideas.

*"The Centre has provided me with tools and opportunities for innovative teaching, and has helped me to pioneer successfully the teaching of mathematics with technology."*

Dr. Fréd Szabo, Mathematics and Statistics

### **6.1 McConnell Project**

In April of 1999, the University received a \$1,200,000 gift from the McConnell Family Foundation for a three year Pilot Technology Pedagogy Project. CTLS was responsible for co-ordination of the McConnell-Concordia Project and in May 2003 we "tied the bow" with the production of a Final Report and the organization of a final presentation for Concordia's Provost, Deans and Mr. Brodhead, CEO of the McConnell Foundation. The report and presentation are available in multimedia format on CD-Rom. The seed money from the McConnell grant was intended to be transformative and self-sustaining, and according to all four Faculties, it was indeed so. For the CTLS, the McConnell funds gave us the resources needed to model and promote the pedagogically sound use of new technologies, both in workshops and in consultations with faculty.

### **6.2 CTLS PowerPoint presentations**

We have integrated technology into most of our workshops through the use of PowerPoint, investing a good deal of time in articulating various pedagogical themes using animated text, images, sound, and video using clips from our video series. The presentation handouts developed have added significantly to our teaching resources. The learning objects created have been used by faculty members and by professionals at other educational institutions.

*"One of the sheets that has influenced me the most (in fact I have kept it in my work binder for the past 2 years up until last week!) is the Lesson Plan Template I even created a Power Point lecture template based on this Lesson Plan Template that I use weekly."*

Dr. Patrice Chalin, Computer Science

We have transformed our intensive workshops so as to critique the use of PowerPoint in the presentation of mini-lessons delivered by participants. Last year we presented at the annual conference of the Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education on our evolution in the use of PowerPoint.

### **6.3 CTLS web site**

The CTLS web site <http://www.concordia.ca/ctls/> is an important vehicle for busy faculty members to access what they need to know at their own leisure. Course planning and the teaching dossier are examples of topics covered on the site. Registration for all our events is administered through the site. There are also links to online journals to help keep

instructors abreast of new developments. New this year is a *Starter's Kit* for new faculty, a selection of information, tips and tools from the rest of our site to help ease them through the first semesters in the classroom. We have received very complimentary feedback on the quality of these web resources from our colleagues and continue to update and improve the site. In June 2004 alone we had 2,777 unique visitors to the site.

An Instructional Developer has been recruited to manage the Task of keeping the site dynamic with the help of Web Developers in Marketing and Communications and IITS. We are discussing the possibility of developing the web site into a database repository that is searchable and interactive. The idea is to establish a set of pedagogical themes and core principles and to capture how these are put into practice in different disciplines. We plan to harness the power of video-streaming technology to provide professors with access to multiple video-based examples of teaching excellence, to allow them to visit, revisit, and reflect on the work of experienced faculty as they exercise their craft with a wide array of diverse students. Over time this would be further developed into an interactive learning environment where the video clips are elaborated on with frequently asked questions, implementation tools, and complementary readings.

#### **6.4 CTLS video series**

The CTLS video series, *Teaching Dialogues*, profiles professors across the disciplines speaking enthusiastically about teaching at Concordia. The videos can be viewed on the CTLS web site: <http://www.concordia.ca/ctls/resources/videos.shtml>. Our aim is to feature and recognize the good work of experienced faculty while allowing new faculty to view their colleagues teaching in the classroom and reflecting on their teaching. An unexpected outcome has been the interest in the videos of university teaching centers around the world, e.g., Japan and the United Arab Emirates. There are currently 11 short videos in the series (see Appendix E for descriptions):

- Connecting to students (Dr. Sheila Mason, Philosophy)
- The art of lecturing (Dr. Martin Singer, History)
- Simulate to stimulate (Linda Kay, Journalism)
- Effective group work (Dr. Bluma Litner, Applied Human Sciences)
- Animating your classroom (Dr. Maureen Gowing, Accountancy)
- Getting students engaged (Nancy Acemian, Computer Science)
- Getting students to understand (Dr. Peter Grogono, Computer Science)
- Improving visual representation (Dr. Sylvia Ruby, Biology)
- Taking the class home (Dr. Leslie Landsberger, ECE)
- Teaching linear algebra with technology (Dr. Fred Szabo, Math & Statistics)
- The art & science of engineering education (Dr. Georgios Vatistas, MECH)

We are presently editing videotapes of six professors in Fine Arts as they discuss and demonstrate the development and assessment of students' creative abilities. Fine Arts is particularly interested in this project as a way of educating professors and students on the unique nature of teaching and learning creative subjects. In the coming academic year, we will profile more professors in JMSB on topics of interest to this Faculty in the areas of teaching large classes, the case method, and critical thinking.

We plan to apply to the Canadian Independent Film & Video Fund (CIFVF) to secure future funding for the CTLS Video Series as well as for a possible instructional video series. The deadline for application is March 2005. The CIFVF is a private sector non-profit organisation dedicated to supporting the development of the non-theatrical industry through the creation of films, videos and new media projects that promote lifelong learning and are produced by Canadian independent producers. In the meantime, we are continuing to use McConnell funds to hire a part-time Video Production Consultant to work on this project.

#### ***6.5 Experiment with videoconferencing in community outreach***

CTLS has aligned its faculty development services to support University initiatives that promote service to the community at large. One of the agendas that matched the criteria for our support was the Institute in Management and Community Development's proposal to convene a videoconference for a coalition of Black community organizations on best practice prevention approaches to strengthen Black families. This activity was seen as an educational tool to increase community capacity to develop a best practice model of prevention for the minority communities and to contribute to their efforts to promote social change.

Thus, the Centre worked with the Institute and other Concordia partners to develop this technology and explore pedagogy, and the Institute collaborated with CDN BCA and its Black community partners on the development of the content and process of the planning and implementation of the videoconference. On May 25<sup>th</sup>, over twenty participants attended the consultation that was hosted, at the other end, by the Ministry of Education in Quebec City. The Ministry is interested in collaborating with Concordia on more projects of this nature. We have met with Lance Evoy, Director of the Institute, to discuss other ways in which we can collaborate on innovative curriculum projects that will contribute to the learning of Concordia students, teachers and the community at large.

## 6.6 Technology-based workshops

*"I was one of the first new hires in a new technology area (time based arts and video) within the Faculty of Fine Arts. As a new faculty member, I found it helpful to work with your Centre to discuss strategies for teaching technology as an art-form. I found your Centre offered a valuable service, both in terms of offering workshops as well as one-on-one feedback and consultations."*

Dr. Leila Sujir, Studio Arts

The CTLS views technology as a lever for learning and our "Show and Tell" workshops give faculty members a forum to show how they do just that. Participants in these workshops do more than demonstrate their technological tools; they explain how they use technology to enhance learning, describe some of the features that work well and others that are less successful. Our strategy is to get faculty members interested, see the benefits, hear from the experiences of others and discuss some of the obstacles. One two-hour workshop a year is not sufficient to highlight the work of all instructors: this year, we added a post-workshop follow-up online where participants could ask questions of one another and receive answers. Next year we would like to stage a Technology and Pedagogy Fair where all instructors could present their technological tools and engage in thoughtful discussions with their colleagues and experts in the field. We are also experimenting using laptops in our Instructional Skills Workshop. Faculty appreciate this opportunity for practice with new technology tools for teaching and learning.

We have invited several guest speakers to Concordia dealing with themes related to the use of technology in teaching. For example, Dr. Gosha Zywno from Ryerson Polytechnic on *Hypermedia-assisted Instruction in Engineering Education*, Craig Plaice from Acadia University on *Learning Objects*, and Peter Larivière on the *Classroom Performance System (CPS)*, a wireless system that enables teachers to obtain immediate responses to oral or written questions from every student in the class. We are also supporting individual faculty who are willing to model for their colleagues exactly the type of things they are doing in the classroom with technology. For example, a Chemistry professor is experimenting with tablet technology to produce dynamic drawings and equations in his PowerPoint presentations. Another professor in Computer Science is producing student tutorials using Camtasia, a software that can easily record videos of desktop activity, edit and publish them in Flash, CD-ROM and streaming video formats. Other faculty members are pilot testing the CPS system. Research has shown that this technology is effective in promoting active participation and monitoring student comprehension.

### **6.7 New Course Design Workshop**

We are working closely with Dr. Philip Abrami, Director of CSLP, to collaborate on research in faculty development. One project involves offering a specially tailored teaching development workshop at Concordia on course design that models the meaningful use of technology both for in-class and out-of-class learning. It is in relation to a current SSHRC grant held by Drs. Amundsen, Weston, Abrami, & McAlpine titled: *A faculty development approach that focuses on learning for the effective integration of technology in higher education.*

The first one-week Course Design Workshop is scheduled for August 23-27, 2004. It is a hands-on event that leads faculty through a principled-approach to course design, culminating in a new course or the revision of a current one, a detailed course syllabus, and a plan for implementing new teaching strategies, including technology-enhanced learning opportunities as appropriate. Follow-up support will be provided as faculty implement their new or revised course designs.

The workshop is funded jointly by the CTLS and the SSHRC grant. It has been successfully offered at McGill for the past 15 years and at Simon Fraser University for the past year. Faculty and graduate students from McGill will play a major role in facilitating this first offering at Concordia together with Janette Barrington from the Centre. Janette has participated in the workshop at McGill and received training as a co-instructor. She is being helped with coordination of this major event that includes access to all print and online materials previously developed at McGill.

Follow-up activities and research with participants will be on a purely voluntary basis and focus on course design projects that involve innovative strategies and pedagogically sound uses of technology. Seven full-time and eight part-time faculty members are registered for the workshop. We are excited by this new workshop because it represents the first opportunity for the CTLS to work collaboratively on course design projects.

### **6.8 The proposed MULTI Project**

Our survey of Chairs confirms that the most important challenge in teaching at Concordia facing both full-time and part-time faculty and a growing contingent of graduate teaching assistants is our students' breadth of ability, background experience, motivation, and willingness/availability for learning. How do we design instruction and assessment that is sensitive to this variation? How do we develop critical and creative thinking at different levels of ability? What are effective professors doing across the disciplines? What innovative strategies can be developed taking advantage of technology? The MULTI Project is a collaborative research and development project designed to answer these

questions proposed by CTLS and Dr. Philip Abrami, Director of CSLP (see proposal in Appendix F). In this proposal, the four Faculties and several university centres would collaborate in a concerted and coordinated effort to meet the challenges of multi-level teaching from the dual perspectives of faculty and students. The proposal is, therefore, an attempt to provide support to faculty and students using technology to enhance learning.

## **7. Promoting teaching development services**

**Objective 7: Promote teaching development services at Concordia towards the goal of achieving a first class comprehensive university.**

Over the past three years, the CTLS has been able to strengthen its core teaching development services and provide a range of teaching improvement activities: reaching out to Faculties to ensure that services match needs, developing customized services for Faculties, Departments and individual faculty members, and providing on-line teaching resources. These activities support our vision to promote teaching effectiveness within the University through more comprehensive planning and joint ventures based upon best practices and empowerment of untapped teaching resources within the University. In the coming years, the CTLS will continue to explore how it can best support and sustain a teaching development agenda that is integrated within the Faculties while continuing to provide a centralized service delivery model.

The main barrier facing the CTLS in achieving our mandate is that teaching development services tend to be undervalued, due in part to the lack of community and University policy around teaching effectiveness. The 1992 External Reviewer's Report of the Learning Development Office concluded with the following: "...for the Office to make real changes in the learning climate at Concordia it must be seen in a positive light by the entire academic community ...the academic leadership in the university can do much to "set the tone" by its stance towards the LDO." Elsewhere it states that "for LDO to succeed in its work of enhancing the quality of teaching and learning at Concordia, university policies to promote and reward good teaching must be observed in spirit and not just in principle." These words still ring true 12 years later and these issues still need to be addressed in order to strengthen the role of the CTLS.

In assessing our accomplishments over the past 3 years, we have concluded that three areas need immediate attention: positioning of the CTLS in the university community, the allocation of appropriate resources, and more systematic impact assessment.

## **7.1 Positioning of the CTLS in the university community**

*"What is really hindering the full deployment of their [the CTLS] resources is the lack of motivation (on the part of the professor population at large) to allocate more time and effort to teaching in general"*

Dr. Nawwaf Kharma, Electrical and Computer Engineering

One of the objectives cited by the Provost is the enhancement of Concordia as a first class comprehensive university. We at CTLS are working to meet this objective both internally and externally. Some of our initiatives include: producing new promotional materials that advertise our services; creating the New Teacher's Handbook to introduce new faculty to critical teaching issues and resources on-campus; visiting the Deans and Chairs to promote the Centre; and publicizing our events through internal media reports. During this reporting period the CTLS has been featured in seven articles in the Thursday Report, three in the ENCS Faculty Quarterly, two in the Concordia University Magazine and two in the Graduate Concordia University Magazine. We intend to further explore how to increase our visibility via articles in the internal and external press.

The CTLS video series promotes excellence in teaching by featuring Concordia professors talking about their teaching. The Faculty of Engineering and Computer Science has a link to these videos from their homepage to show incoming students what to expect from their professors; Fine Arts has the same goal in mind. These links help educate the community at large but they also promote the CTLS, our online resources and face-to-face activities.

Providing professional development for other post-secondary institutions promotes the reputation of our Centre and the University as a site of expertise in the area of faculty development. In addition, special projects such as the McConnell Project and the newly proposed collaboration with CSLP on multilevel teaching will also enhance our reputation.

Building a progressive teaching community is vital to the long-term viability of the University. Strengthening the commitment to teaching excellence and translating these into concrete achievements is a significant goal for the University. A critical element in achieving this goal is to build the expectation that it is acceptable and desirable that all faculty members engage in activities that promote teaching excellence, not just faculty new to teaching or those experiencing difficulties. The CTLS will only become central to the university when faculty members and academic administrators accept teaching development as a primary and continuing goal, when it is understood that to succeed with



faculty development is to improve not only individual faculty members, but the institution as a whole.

### ***7.2 The allocation of appropriate resources***

The major asset of CTLS is its staff, who have developed a diverse range of faculty development expertise and knowledge, and who disseminate this information in a respectful manner that is empowering, enabling, and in certain instances, transformational. In order to realize our plans for developing the teaching agenda at Concordia, we need additional financial resources, especially a budget allocation for a permanent Instructional Developer position.

Additional funds could also be made available for teaching awards, conferences on teaching, teaching grants, and course remissions for Teaching Fellows. This would enable the CTLS to go beyond the delivery of core services to developing and providing more discipline-specific expertise to individual Faculties, to assist faculty engaged in classroom research and/or scholarly writing about teaching within their disciplines, to work on special teaching projects with technology, and to develop tools to evaluate our impact.

### ***7.3 Systematic impact assessment***

Although many faculty members engage in a wide range of activities with the Centre, it is difficult to assess the long-term impact of our training beyond the level of reported participant satisfaction following an event. Presently, we assess impact through self-reporting, observation of teaching practice, and participant's discourse on teaching. Clearly it would be desirable to have a full assessment of our impact. Since such an assessment would involve consideration of numerous variables, we would need to develop a database to keep track of faculty needs, the kinds of services they engage in, and the results of this engagement. We are currently looking into acquiring the University of Ottawa's consultation and workshop database to be used as a template for the CTLS.

## **Conclusion**

The CTLS, through implementation of its Academic Plan 2001-2004, has striven to enrich the learning of students by supporting faculty members in their teaching. During this time we have strengthened our relationships with representatives from each of the Faculties, many departments and service units, and augmented our services in response to actual and emerging needs. By engaging in continuous impact assessment, we have been

able to monitor our effectiveness with specific groups such as new faculty, part-time faculty and graduate students.

Based on the evaluation of our work by our clientele, as well as our own self-assessment, we consider the Centre's main achievements in the last three years to be:

- The development of strategic partnerships with the Faculties and many departments to provide customized faculty development initiatives.
- The continued success of our interdisciplinary programs that encourage dialogue across program and service boundaries.
- The creation of new print-based, video and web-based resources that promote an exchange of ideas on teaching improvement strategies, including the beginning of a repository of "best practices" of Concordia professors.
- Networking with Library Services, Advocacy (Office of Students with Disabilities), the Office of Research, CUPFA and others to coordinate services.

Despite our successes, we have also faced two main barriers that prevent us from fully realizing the objectives set out in our Academic Plan. One barrier is the need for additional resources. To overcome this barrier, we have: formed partnerships with certain departments and service units to share resources and coordinate efforts; created the new contract position of Instructional Developer to help manage the increased workload; collaborated with the CSLP to develop a research and development proposal on multilevel teaching for external funding; conducted several intensive workshops for Dawson College; and hired graduate students in Educational Technology for internship projects.

A further barrier we face is the need for increased visibility. The CTLS' contribution to the University is limited by a general lack of awareness about our services. Many of our recent efforts to remedy this situation have been successful, especially our interviews of Chairs and our programs for new faculty. One recommendation to increase our visibility more would be to have Teaching Fellows designated in each of the four Faculties. These Fellows would work with the CTLS while contributing to research in higher education in their respective fields.

The strengths of the CTLS programs suggest that the Centre is well positioned to take more of a leadership role in helping the Administration develop university-wide policies that respond to the need for common standards, especially on the assessment of student learning and on the evaluation of teaching dossiers. Historically, we have not been involved in some key areas of policy development and feel that we are now in the

position to take on a greater role in aligning the University's goal of teaching excellence with its programs, resources and policies.

*"CTLS continues to enrich the pedagogical fabric of the Faculty of Fine Arts.*

*It is remarkable that this small group of dedicated professionals can accomplish so much. Most importantly, Olivia and her staff are sensitive, approachable, and flexible, always ready to assist with advice and action as needed, to help us to become the best of teachers.*

Dr. Loren Lerner, Art History

Finally, the CTLS' major asset is its staff. This report is an attestation of our commitment to Concordia and the new Provost. In the coming years, the CTLS will continue to explore how we can best provide customized support to the Faculties while providing centralized services to faculty, part-time instructors and a growing contingent of graduate teaching assistants. Rebuilding Concordia as a first-class comprehensive university is a significant goal for us all.

# APPENDIX A



Re: Impact of the Centre for Teaching and Learning Services

Dear Olivia;

Thanks for your request for a statement about the impact of the CTLS. The CTLS provides valuable services that have a substantial influence on professors, especially young faculty members.

Young faculty members try to build a teaching dossier that will win contract renewals and tenure, and most have a strong commitment to excellent teaching. But sometimes a young professor receives a poor teaching evaluation from a class. The CTLS has been very effective in developing the teaching skills of young professors. The one-on-one contact identifies problems directly and the CTLS is able to suggest solutions. In tenure deliberations, the involvement of the CTLS leads to dramatically-improved course evaluations. The CTLS helps to create excellent teachers.

The Workshops organized by the CTLS are of substantial value. Newly-hired professors need to learn about the Concordia culture and environment. Teaching workshops provide an opportunity for young faculty to hear from their more-experienced peers about coping with various aspects of teaching: organizing a course outline; classroom presentation styles; the role and importance of the mid-term examination; final examination formats; grading and assigning a letter grade; answering student's enquiries about grades; and dealing with problem students. Workshops provide a forum where young professors can ask questions. CTLS Workshops provide an opportunity to meet professors from other departments in the Faculty. Indeed, as an older faculty member, I have benefited from listening to the discussion at the workshops, sharing the experiences of others in dealing with students and in developing effective teaching methods.

The CTLS organizes workshops for teaching assistants or "TAs" as well. Graduate students working as TAs need to learn to be effective teachers both for classroom presentations such as tutorials and for one-on-one instruction in the laboratories. The TA Workshop provides instruction for TAs on effective teaching and on the "people skills" needed to deal with students. Learning how to be an effective teacher is a valuable, even essential, part of the graduate student experience, and TA workshops may be the only instruction on teaching that is available to them. Some grad students will go on to be professors at other schools. Many will work in industry and "people skills" will help them in their relationships to their co-workers and subordinates

Sincerely,

Dr. Christopher W. Trueman, Eng.,

Professor, ECE Department and Acting Director, General Studies Unit,

Faculty of Engineering and Computer Science

trueman@ece.concordia.ca

848-2424 ext. 3094

# THE IMPACT OF THE TEACHING AND LEARNING SERVICES CENTRE ON MY WORK

Dr. Fred E. Szabo  
Department of Mathematics and Statistics  
Concordia University, Montreal

July 4, 2004

## INTRODUCTION

In my experience, the Teaching and Learning Services Centre is an essential structural element that balances the goals of Concordia University as a research institution with those of Concordia University dedicated to excellence in teaching and the dissemination of new knowledge. While the peer support system provides most university professors with well understood role models for research, the resources for the cultivation of good teaching are considerably more elusive and require explicit internal support. The Teaching and Learning Services Centre serves this need. In this statement, I will briefly sketch how the Centre has provided me with tools and opportunities for innovative teaching, and has helped me to pioneer successfully the teaching of mathematics with technology.

## TEACHING WITH TECHNOLOGY

As part of its pedagogical innovations awards program, the Centre has provided me with two Concordia University Faculty Teaching Development Awards (2000-2001 and 2001-2002) for the development of visual and interactive resources for teaching and learning, and the creation of a web-based environment for open and distance learning. The interactive web pages for MAST 232, 234, 235, and MATZ 298A, as well as their WebCT-based predecessors were the results of this support. As the teaching and learning material improved through the activities supported by these awards, so did the student comments on the value of this new interactive teaching and learning approach in mathematics.

The video *Teaching Linear Algebra with Technology* on the Teaching and Learning Services website describes in some detail how I was able to use the two development grants to move my courses from the

classroom to the teaching labs. Since then, the environment and my teaching and learning resources have been considerably improved. My courses are now taught entirely in the Arts and Science Teaching and Learning Centre. I am attaching the student comments from one of my 2004 Teaching Evaluations to show how far I have been able to perfect my innovative approach to teaching and learning that started with mentioned teaching development awards.

The following excerpt from the Preface of my book *LINEAR ALGEBRA: AN INTRODUCTION USING MAPLE* illustrates how the support of the Teaching and Learning Services Centre has helped me develop the expertise and confidence to put my ideas into print. They are samples that express my experience-based view on the teaching of linear algebra with technology.

...

#### TO THE TEACHER

*The aim of the book is to make linear algebra accessible to college majors through a narrative presentation of the material, enriched by opportunities for interactive teaching and learning using the Maple computing system. The text provides a gentle, step-by-step introduction to technology. It contains routine Maple examples and exercises to build up the students' confidence and experience with the technology. This gradual approach has been effective among my students, who often have varying degrees of proficiency with technology when they begin the course.*

...

*One of the advantages of using technology in the teaching of linear algebra is that it eliminates the arithmetical tedium associated with certain aspects of the subject. Students are able to tackle realistic problems and can be sure of the accuracy of their solutions. Furthermore, technology provides the opportunity to engage in modest forms of research so that individuals as well as groups can work on meaningful projects. This book is not, however, about programming or computational complexity. Most basic exercises can be solved by hand, and all exercises can be solved with the functions built into Maple, supplemented with the additional routines supplied in the packages specified in Appendix E.*

*In many ways it can be argued that computers play an essential role not only in using linear algebra, but also in learning it. Many algorithms used in linear algebra, such as Gaussian elimination by elementary row operations, calculation of determinants by Laplace expansions, and matrix inversion using elementary matrices, are arithmetically simple but space and time intensive. Once the algorithms have been mastered, there is little gain in spending extended periods of time on manual manipulations at the expense of learning other material. Moreover, certain key objects of linear algebra, such as eigenvalues, are algorithmically inaccessible in all but the simplest cases.*

*In this text, we are aiming to strike a balance between the time spent on the conceptual aspects of the subject and that spent on the computational aspects. At every step along the way, Maple serves to remove arithmetical obstacles, to build confidence, to illustrate concepts and constructions, and to facilitate teaching and learning. Experience in the classroom suggests that this approach makes linear algebra more accessible and the learning and teaching of it more enjoyable and rewarding. Maple is an easy tool for exploring the consequences of changes in assumptions and data, and is ideal for practicing precision and rigor. Many topics of current interest, such as large matrices and singular value decompositions, are impossible to learn*

and teach without technology.

...

*Experience shows that learning linear algebra with the help of technology is intellectually rewarding and pedagogically sound, as long as we keep focused on the fact that technology is a means to an end, not the end itself. As students work their way through this thematically organized text, they will acquire both a solid, theoretical, Maple-independent knowledge of linear algebra as well as a collection of powerful computational techniques for applying these skills in practice.*

### PEDAGOGICAL QUESTIONS

*How can we best motivate a given topic? How can students best learn linear algebra? How can we free up time to discuss mathematical ideas and results? How can we teach students the conceptual benefits of notational rigor? Over the last five years, I have discovered plausible answers to many of these questions using technology. The presentation of linear algebra and the choice and arrangement of topics in this text is my answer to such questions.*

### TO THE STUDENT

*The goals of this book are to stimulate you intellectually, to expose you to the beauty and utility of linear algebra, and to develop your analytical skills. The systematic interplay between theory and practice throughout the text is designed for this purpose. In this connection, technology acts as both a catalyst and a facilitator. You will find it easier to discuss mathematical ideas with your classmates since you will develop confidence in the computational correctness of your work. You will also find that learning and retention can be reinforced through easy electronic experimentation. Theoretical material therefore becomes more accessible. By using Maple to replicate the worked examples and illustrations in this book, you can intersperse your studies with periods of playful exploration. As you study difficult concepts, theorems, and definitions, you can use Maple to generate examples and counterexamples to test and deepen your understanding of challenging material, even when some of the subject matter is not yet within your grasp.*

*You will find that the exercises are grouped into two levels: exercises to be done using pencil and paper, and exercises to be done with Maple. At the beginning it may be faster for you to learn a particular technique by doing the Maple exercises first. You can then test your understanding by doing the remaining exercises by hand. Once you have a thorough understanding of a topic, you will usually find it more rewarding to use Maple to solve difficult problems than to spend time on solving easy problems by pencil and paper. However, you usually need enough manual practice to be able to succeed in tests and exams.*

## LEARNING WITH TECHNOLOGY

In addition to financial support, the members of the Concordia University Teaching and Learning Services Centre have been enthusiastic sounding boards and resource persons for my work. Through discussions and workshops, they have given me the confidence needed to put my ideas on paper and write several innovative textbooks on linear algebra in which interactive learning is fully integrated. The prefaces of these books describe the teaching and learning philosophy that I have developed over the year through classroom



experience. The credibility of these texts relies heavily on the accolades I have received over the years from students taught with my methods and the resource material that have resulted from my pedagogical innovations. Here is an unedited sample of student comments on my recently taught course in linear algebra.

#### STUDENT COMMENTS, MAST 235/4/A TEACHING EVALUATION

It is important to note that prior to the adoption of interactive teaching and learning, most of my colleagues disliked teaching this course. The material is computation-intensive and the students are usually less well prepared and qualified than Honours and Specialization students.

PROF: SZABO, MANFRED  
MAST 235/4/A DEPT MATH—QUEST: FULLTIME  
REG: 26  
RECORD # 012378  
March 27, 2004

16 *He is an experienced teacher and knows his material.*

17 *None The teacher tell us how the major is career-wise, its use etc.*

16 *The way he explained everything, and the way he used the labs.*

16 *He makes the class enjoyable, he's very energetic and simplifies things to make us understand. His notes are great and uses interactive examples which I found extremely useful. Other courses could benefit from this teaching strategy. The classroom was excellent, lighting, computers, the overall space.*

16 *N/A*

17 *nothing poorly*

16 *excellent wealth of material*

17 *- coordination between book - tex(SN) files and maple files - web site not always up dated great course would take another like this.*

16 *Very excellent use of the computer lab Very enthusiastic and encouraging Using software to teach linear algebra is a great idea.*

17 *T.A. taught several classes*

16 *Openness, helpful, friendly, understanding Good job Dr. Szabo! Keep up the good work!*

16 *Anticipation for all students of understanding the material. Understanding, patient and very clear.*

17 *None Excellent teacher*

16 *Very organized and helpful for whoever needed it. He - gives more than enough material for us to study from and practice with. An excellent teacher.*

- 17 *Nothing to me was poorly done.*
- 16 *Class participation made the class interesting: enjoyed coming to class learnt a lot compared to other math class*
- 16 *Illustrating the material in a useful manner.*
- 17 *Nothing. This is the best teacher I've ever had.*
- 16 *The lectures given in class were very well organized, the teacher knows the material very well and that help students understand better and do good in class. There's not many teacher like this so it's a relief being in a class with a great teacher.*
- 16 *The use of various softwares to introduce Linear Algebra.*
- 16 *I enjoyed his encouragement for participation. Very helpful and provided good examples. I really enjoyed having Sylvain (the teacher's assistant) He helped prepare samples for the quizzes andand midterms... he was very useful*
- 16 *Always tries to encourage participation of classmates. Less time wasted this semester as compared to the last because of TA handling the computer stuff.*
- 17 *Professor was absent for 3-4 classes, make routine of class.*
- 17 *No applications.*

## RECOMMENDATION

Based on my personal experience and interaction with the Teaching and Learning Services Centre, I recommend that the Centre be strengthened with the creation of an elected Board for Advancement of Teaching and Learning (BATL) overseeing the activities of the Centre. The Board meetings would be chaired by the Director of the Centre. The BATL would be to the Centre what BGS (Board of Graduate Studies) is to the School of Graduate Studies. The mandate of the Centre would be to identify, promote, and popularize university-wide activities and initiatives in innovative teaching and learning by Concordia professors in all faculties, as well as in the School of Graduate Studies. The revised structure of the Centre should be based on the results of a comparative study of the structures in place other leading universities that prize good teaching and effective learning.

## MANDATE OF THE CENTRE

The activities of the Centre should probably include the following:

- Organization of regular university-wide workshops on innovative teaching. Attendance of these workshops should be documented in the biannual faculty review process and count towards faculty evaluations.

- Organization of faculty-specific workshops on innovative teaching for new faculty members. These workshops could be coupled with a mentor system pairing experience faculty members with new faculty.
- Organization of student presentations on effective learning and study methods.
- Collaboration with other Universities in the promotion of innovative teaching and learning. For example, CONAHEC, the Consortium for North American Higher Education Collaboration, provides an excellent international forum for this type of work.
- Participation at national and international conferences, studies, and workshops on innovative teaching. For example, McGraw-Hill-Ryerson organizes an annual Canadian conference on the use of technology in teaching and learning.
- Management of annual prizes for teaching excellence based on student teaching evaluations. The prizes should take into consideration the nature of the courses used in the evaluation (large classes, small classes, introductory courses, advanced courses, mandatory courses, optional courses, general education courses, etc.)
- The Centre should provide tangible support for Concordia professors to participate in such competitions as the 3M Teaching Awards. Some universities invest considerable resources in helping their faculty members to obtain such awards.
- Present annual reports on the quantitative and perhaps even some qualitative trends in the annual faculty teaching evaluations. Feedback to the University at large through annual reports to Senate would be an important component in the promotion of and support for good teaching at Concordia.

## RELEVANT WEBSITES

1. *Teaching Linear Algebra with Technology*. Concordia Teaching and Learning Services Website.
2. Alcor websites for MAST 234, 235, 298A.

## **The Centre for Teaching and Learning Services (CTLS) at Concordia**

I have been involved in the CTLS (and its earlier incarnation, the Learning Development Office – LDO) for many years. The service has played an important role in helping me to develop my skills at course delivery and design, and to pass on some of these ideas to my colleagues. I have also served on the Advisory Board of the CTLS for three years.

### **Course delivery and design**

I take one or two workshops offered by the CTLS every year. Over the years in these workshops, the CTLS has provided me with useful ideas on topics that include: Designing course outlines, Dealing with disruptive behaviour, Cooperative learning, Managing the first day of class, a four-day Instructional Skills Workshop, Critical thinking, Plagiarism, Course web sites, and so on. The next workshop I plan to take is a five-day workshop in August 2004 on course design. I generally find these workshops to be very good; I invariably come away with actionable ideas that I am easily able to incorporate into my teaching.

The CTLS has also been of service to me in the development of course materials. I am the course coordinator of one of the largest courses in the university, *Contemporary Business Thinking*. Each year, 35 to 40 sections of this course are taught by 12-15 lecturers and part-time instructors. I wrote *Reflecting on Business: A handbook of critical thinking* for students of this course. Olivia Rovinescu, the Director of the CTLS, reviewed the manuscript and offered advice and encouragement in the preparation of this handbook. It is also worth noting that a grant from the CTLS funded the research assistants who helped with writing exercises for the handbook.

I also have written a resource book for new instructors of the course. The inspiration for this instructors' guide was reference material collected from the CTLS over the years, as well as the CTLS website. This guide, too, was reviewed by Ms Rovinescu. It has been well received by not only the instructors of the course, but some of my colleagues, new and old, who teach other Management Department courses.

### **Sharing ideas with colleagues**

The CTLS (then LDO) introduced the Instructional Skills Workshop (ISW) to Concordia over a decade ago. I was one of the first group of six who participated in the ISW. Since then, I have been asked to act as co-facilitator of ISWs several times. It is an effective learning tool, both for participants and faculty facilitators. Incidentally, the ISW, even more so than other CTLS workshops, has the added advantage of getting people in different faculties to interact and learn from the approaches of other disciplines.

I have also been part of the CTLS workshops organized specifically for Management Department (Critical thinking and Working in groups), and for the John Molson School of Business (Assessment and grading). I have twice been a panel member in the CTLS session for new faculty members, and I am looking forward to playing this role again next month. In

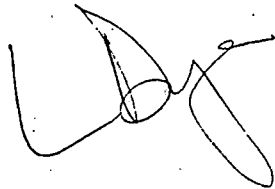
general, I think the CTLS is an excellent stimulant to get colleagues to share their ideas and "tips" about teaching.

I should note explicitly the role of the CTLS in orienting new faculty members. I have mentioned my experience with their help in developing a guide for new teachers. The panel discussions and ISWs for new faculty members are significant innovations in developing teaching in recent years. Just last month I was speaking with a colleague who took an ISW in her first year; she spoke enthusiastically about her experience and mentioned that she was continuing to interact with and learn from the other new faculty members she met at the ISW. Compared with my own memories of being a new teacher at Concordia 20-odd years ago, this is an immense improvement.

### **CTLS Advisory Board**

I have sat on the CTLS Advisory Board for three years. This has given me the opportunity to see first-hand the creativity, diligence and dedication of the staff. I am struck that such a small group of people has such a large role to fulfill in the teaching mission of Concordia. Despite their small size, I think they provide an excellent service.

*Linda Dyer*  
21 July 2004

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'LD' with a stylized flourish extending to the right.



# Concordia

U N I V E R S I T Y

July 8, 2004

Olivia Rovinescu  
Director, Center for Teaching and Learning Services  
Concordia University  
7141 Sherbrooke Street. W.  
Montreal, Quebec, Canada, H4B1R6

Dear Olivia:

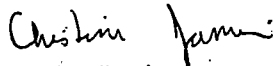
I am writing to outline some of my experiences working with the Centre for Teaching and Learning Services. There are several areas in which the Centre has impacted my teaching at Concordia.

1. My first experience of teaching a large class presented me with significant difficulties. Because the class (Theo 204 Introduction to Christian Ethics – 105 students registered) was so large, my biggest difficulty was in structuring my classes in the manner appropriate to the group. My traditional style of teaching, which is interactive, was completely inappropriate for this group of students. I was able to meet with someone from the Centre and received both support and concrete advice on how to teach in large classes. It was particularly helpful that someone from your centre sat in on one of my classes and gave me concrete feedback. Also helpful during this course was the feedback I received from the Centre as a result of the course evaluations. Thanks to the Centre, I was able to distribute these evaluations to my class and received the feedback in a timely manner so that I was able to apply this feedback to my class. I think the greatest impact your Centre had on my teaching was in helping me to learn how to shift how I prepare for classes depending on the size of the group. These were valuable skills to learn and have stood me in good stead since.
2. I also found it very helpful to be able to contact your Centre and speak with someone there about the discouragement I felt with my first attempt at teaching a large class. I feel that being able to speak to someone about my difficulties and frustration in this teaching context cleared enough space for me to feel motivated to try the different approaches that were subsequently suggested.
3. Also very helpful were concrete tools that your centre provided that I used in that class and in many subsequent classes since. These suggestions helped me to organize my classes in a more structured manner. Also, I was given material to read that I found extremely useful. Because of this assistance, I felt much more in control of my class presentations and I think the class became much more productive and pleasant for all involved. The benefits of this have continued to impact my teaching even in smaller classes.
4. I have attended several workshops provided by the Centre for Teaching and Learning Services. For example, soon after beginning teaching at Concordia, I attended the Centre's "One Day Instructional Skills Workshop" in which I learned some very useful skills. I have also attended workshops on the WebCT, and Power Point. I plan to attend more workshops of this

nature as they are excellent opportunities to improve my teaching skills and to generally keep up to date on new teaching techniques and technological tools that will enhance my teaching.

In my view, the quality of the work at the Centre for Teaching and Learning Services is excellent. It is an important service that your Centre provides to Concordia faculty.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Christine Jamieson".

Christine Jamieson  
Graduate Program Director  
Theological Studies Department



# Concordia

UNIVERSITY

Attention: Olivia Rovinescu  
Director  
Centre for Teaching and Learning Services  
Concordia University


## Report on my experience with the Centre for Teaching and Learning Services

Prior to my arrival at Concordia in 2002, my teaching experience was limited to teaching assistantships and Oxford-style tutorials. The tutorial is the main form of undergraduate teaching at Oxford University and involves assigning essays, then meeting with students either individually or in groups of less than four to discuss the essay. It was at Concordia therefore that I got my first experience in teaching a traditional North-American style university course.

I have attended several workshops offered at the Centre for Teaching and Learning Services, including the Orientation for New Faculty, the Instructional Skills workshop, the Developing a Teaching Philosophy Statement workshop and the Problem-Based Learning workshop. I feel that I have profited a great deal from these sessions.

I have applied several of their suggestions to great benefit. For instance, I now regularly ask for feedback from students: this helps the students focus on directing their learning, and helps me know where to give more assistance. I have also asked a more senior faculty member to sit in on one of my classes and give me feedback on my teaching methods.

In retrospect, I realise that in my first year of teaching, I focussed mainly on the academic aspects of preparing the course and less on ensuring that the students had a comfortable learning environment. The workshops offered by the Centre for Teaching and Learning Services helped me develop ways of achieving this latter goal. I think that my teaching is improving and that I am learning a great deal in the process. This is reflected in my course evaluations which have improved steadily since my arrival.

  
Emma Despland  
Biology Department  
Concordia University



Montreal, July 13, 2004

To whom it may concern

This letter is a brief assessment of the impact of the Centre for Teaching and Learning Services help on my teaching.

In 1993, I came to the Department of Civil Engineering at Concordia University as a known researcher but without teaching experience. Subsequently, I implemented rather bad teaching habits that I had experienced in Europe, and I tried to apply a "trial-and-error" method during lecturing. Final teaching results were devastating: students' evaluation was very low (more than 3 out of 5) and I felt depressed. Somebody in the Department suggested asking for help from the Centre for Teaching and Learning Services (CTLS). Since that time, I have taken several courses given by this Centre (as an individual and as a Department member) and results were impressive: attendance at my courses increased, students have been satisfied (my last evaluation was a little above 1), I have found pleasure in transferring my knowledge, not to mention that I have received tenure and several merits following evaluation of my professional performance.

The methods suggested and applied by Centre for Teaching and Learning Services were amazing, unexpected, original and successful. I attended 3-day Instructional Skills Workshop where I prepared and delivered mini-lessons, and received feedback on my teaching. I also participated in 3 departmental workshops on Collaborative Learning, Uses of Technology in Teaching, and one on Instructional Strategies. In addition to giving a series of well-prepared seminars showing instructional films, CTLS instructors taught pronunciation and gesticulation, syllabus preparation, web use, remote control use, etc. They also filmed me during lectures, made inquiries among my students, and showed an incredible perseverance in making me an effective teacher. The topics of listed by CTLS seminars are so interesting that I always regret that I cannot attend all of them because of lack of time.

I can only be certain of my success in teaching when I see that our engineering students are engaged in incredible careers around the world. And they do not forget their teachers. Recently, one of them, Tony from Connecticut, showed up with his wife in my office. He is a happy engineer whose work has been rewarded by remuneration of 250 USD per hour. This is only one from several examples of successful teaching skills.

Looking from the 10-year perspective, I must admit that my personal success as a teacher is partially due to the help of the Centre for Teaching and Learning Services.

Maria Elektorowicz PhD, ing., FCSCE  
Associate Professor  
Undergraduate Program Director  
BCEE, Concordia University  
Tel. 514 848 2424 ext 7805  
Fax 514 848 2809  
mariae@civil.concordia.ca



# Concordia

UNIVERSITY

Olivia Rovinescu  
Director, Centre for Teaching and Learning Services

June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2004

Dear Olivia,

After our conversation a few weeks ago, I wanted to follow up with a more formal expression of my appreciation for the Instructional Skills Workshop (ISW) that you co-facilitated in December 2001 with Janette Barington. I participated in the workshop at the end of my first semester teaching at Concordia in the Department of Applied Human Science.

My main teaching concern at the time was focused on AHSC 220 Lifespan Growth and Development. This is a large, content-rich lecture course. In my first semester, I struggled to make the course more interactive and engaging for students, while also covering all of the course material.

In the ISW, I learned specific techniques for improving the quality of the class as well as a strategy for designing classes that ensured I appropriately integrated these techniques. I found the format for course design that you presented to be invaluable in planning my classes. The design of the workshop itself, which included instruction, discussion, practice teach pieces (video-taped) and, most importantly, feedback from facilitators and participants created a highly engaging learning environment that could not quickly be forgotten.

The following semester I put this new learning into practice, designing my classes so that students would be more involved and more challenged to integrate, analyze and evaluate the course material in class as well as outside of class. I used the information provided in the ISW and began to link the material to the students' personal experience and integrate more exercises of varying lengths into the classes. The success of these changes is clearly demonstrated in my course evaluations from the Fall and Winter terms. Although the percentile (>) gradings are higher in the first term, you can see that the absolute score improved from the term before the ISW to the term after *in every category*. I attribute this to the excellent work done by yourself and Janette, and the changes made to my teaching as a result of the ISW.

Thank you, once again, for your time and excellent work.

Yours sincerely,

Eva Pomeroy, PhD  
Lecturer  
Applied Human Science

# **A Brief Report on the Instructional Skills Workshop**

By Worku Abera, June 8, 2003

Overall, I found the workshop useful for three main reasons: it validated my intuitive approach to teaching, it provided me with constructive feedback, and it gave the opportunity to recognize my teaching strengths and weaknesses.

## **Validation**

Without realizing the theoretical framework or pedagogical structure of a lesson plan, I have been practising many of the elements incorporated into the lesson plan that we were exposed to in the workshop. For example, at the beginning of each class, I always tell students the purpose of the lecture, and if the lecture continues into the next class, I remind the students once again the objective of the lecture. The lesson plan refers to this as "purpose of the lesson".

A second component of the lesson plan is "the bridge in". According to the lesson plan we learnt, it is suggested that we provide, at the beginning of each class, a "bridge in" -- or what journalists call the "hook" to the story - a parable, a quote, or humour, that raises the interest of the student.

In presenting concepts, theories, and models, I also relate them to current events or issues, which makes learning economics interesting for the students. From experience, I have discovered that relating concepts to current events, rather than drawing graphs or calculating numbers, often contributes more to helping student understand the theoretical discussions of the lecture.

The purpose of the "bridge in" is to capture the attention of the students at the beginning of the lecture. However, while the "bridge in", whether it is a joke, a cartoon, a story, or a poignant quotation, may captivate the students at the beginning of the lesson, I am not sure if it can sustain their interest throughout the lecture. Second, students may not even grasp the message incorporated in the "bridge in". The trick, I believe (at least in teaching economics) is to link the theoretical discussions to events and stories that students can relate to. In any case, attending the workshop made me more aware of the usefulness of "hooks" in capturing the attention of students.

A third component of the lesson plan is engaging students in the presentation of the lecture. Here again, following one of my favourite professors at McGill as a model, I have always enjoyed asking questions as I present concepts, and have often marvelled at the range of answers students give, some of which are perceptive and original. It seems to me that the teaching of economics readily lends itself to that kind of approach. I could ask the students, "What do you think influences demand? Why should we care about changes in the value of the dollar, the rate of unemployment, the national debt, and so on?" Invariably some of the students will answer correctly by either relying on their intuition or their prior knowledge, while others may give the wrong answers. In either case, posing the question has achieved its purpose: that of teasing their curiosity in the subject being discussed. The lesson plan calls this component "pre-test".

Once I have presented a given concept or theory, I try to break the lecture by giving in-class problems, sometimes individual assignments and often group assignments. Again from experience, I have discovered that students learn far more when they attempt to solve problems and when they have the opportunity to discuss problems in class. The lesson plan refers to this as "check for understanding". I have also concluded a topic by pointing out the main ideas covered in the lecture. The lesson plans calls it "recap and closure". I am repeating these points not to demonstrate what I have learnt from the workshop, but rather to appreciate how the seminar helped me realize the teaching practices I have discovered through trial and error over the last 15 years fit nicely into a pedagogical framework.

Listening to the comments of my colleagues who participated in the workshop, I can conclude that I am not the only one who had been applying some if not most of the elements of the lesson plan. What attending the workshop did for me is not so much teach me a revolutionary technique of teaching as validate the practices I have adopted from my experience. The lesson plan provides me with a pedagogical structure by which I can appreciate my teaching. I have no doubt that my colleagues and I would have benefited even more had we been exposed to the lesson plan earlier.

### **Theoretical Balm**

The lesson plan is based on the psychology of learning, primarily Bloom's taxonomy of learning and Kolb's theory of learning styles. Given the time constraint facing the workshop, these theories were covered rather superficially, and their role appears to be not so much to enlighten as to sanction the approach in the lesson plan. For example, Kolb's theory of learning styles suggests that we should structure our teaching methods to suit the learning styles of students. I have some doubts about the relevance of Kolb's categories to the lesson plan. First, I am not convinced that the questions used for categorising learners are legitimate indicators of learning styles. Second, I am not sure if the categories are mutually exclusive. Third, even if one were to accept the categories as legitimate, students in each class may probably be classified into all of Kolb's learning styles. Hence the proposal that we match our teaching techniques to the learning styles of students becomes impractical. (Perhaps the implication of the theory may be that each element of the lesson plan serves each category of learning styles better than another category). These are just minor theoretical quibbles.

Given my reservations and the brevity of the theoretical presentation, the theoretical aspect of the workshop was an unnecessary detour. Moreover, in order to become a good teacher, I am not convinced that one has to be familiar with the theoretical underpinnings of the psychology of learning, although knowing a theory on learning may help. Just as one need not be a mechanical engineer to be a good driver, one need not be au courant with the finer discussions of the psychology of learning.

### **Feedback**

For me the most useful part of the workshop was the constructive feedback I received from both the animators and my colleagues. I felt that their criticisms, while not brutal, were highly

constructive, presented in the spirit of helping the colleague improve his/her teaching styles. From their feedback I was able to realize that I had exaggerated some of my teaching skill weaknesses.

## **Realisation**

It may seem strange to admit this but perhaps because of my own personality, I tended to exaggerate my teaching weaknesses. I must admit that I felt rather uncomfortable lecturing to my colleagues, during the first mini lecture. I felt a little bit insecure about my teaching style, as I had to expose myself to five of my colleagues. I had to take off whatever public mask I had been wearing in interacting with them over the years. Exposing myself to my colleagues, although I knew that they were decent and warm people, was not an easy exercise. But since I had summoned the courage to come to the workshop I had to do it.

I thought I was very well prepared on the first day of presentation on a topic that I was quite familiar with. After I overcame my initial inhibition of lecturing to my colleagues, in about two minutes of the lecture, I was cruising well. However, the reaction I received from my colleagues, while not entirely negative, was critical. Someone commented that "Economics must be a dry subject", a polite way of saying that the commentator found my presentation boring. I was a bit surprised but not devastated by the remark; the other commentators suggested that I should have engaged them more and become more passionate about my presentation. Again, I found the comments somewhat difficult to accept since I consider myself quite engaging and passionate in my teaching.

After listening to the presentations of the other colleagues, I immediately realized that they all have their teaching strengths and weaknesses. After all, nobody was perfect; what a discovery. Silly as this may sound, this realisation enabled me, in my second presentation, to just be myself and present my lecture as I had been doing in front of students for the last 15 years, taking into account the feedback I had received from the previous day. The response was highly positive. I also saw the improvement in my teaching in the second video. I am sure that part of the improvement in my presentation was that I felt more comfortable with my colleagues in the second mini lecture since I had been with them for three days, confined to the same room and exchanging ideas. Whether it was the realisation of my own strengths, the imperfections of the others, or the feeling of comfortableness, the experience while not transformative was certainly cathartic. With the pedagogical tools I have acquired, the constructive suggestions I have received, and the imperfections I have discovered, I feel more comfortable and secure in my teaching.

Overall, the workshop was highly useful as an exercise in improving one's teaching techniques, as it provided a pedagogical framework and collegial feedback by which teaching can be assessed.

## **Suggestions**

From my experience, I strongly recommend the teaching skills workshop to Dawson instructors,

young and old. To make the workshop effective for Dawson participants, I would like to make the following suggestions.

1. Since the core component of the exercise is the feedback from the animators and participants, it is advisable to avoid, at least initially, certain highly critical and cynical individuals.
2. To show the universal appeal of the lesson plan, it will be more useful to include a diverse group of instructors from different programs.
3. While the lesson plan is important, in my opinion its delivery is even more important. An excellent lesson plan, if not delivered well, will not achieve its goals. I strongly recommend a workshop focussing on delivery, which could include "voice management", varying the volume of one's speech, and applying timely gestures and facial expressions.
4. I think it would be useful to assess the extent to which we have adopted the lesson plan by attending each other's class and giving each other constructive suggestions. We should move from the experimental stage to the actual field: the classroom.
5. The College should provide the required resources for the implementation of the lesson plan and for the provision of the workshop at Dawson.

If I seem over enthusiastic about the teaching skills workshop, it is because I found it effective for the reasons I have outlined. At the end the workshop, though physically exhausted, I, like the rest of the participants, felt great about participating in the workshop as it rekindled my desire for teaching, reinvigorated my commitment to students, refuelled my enthusiasm for pedagogy, and endowed me with more pedagogical tools. Thank you Laurie.

Dear Sir/Madam,

The Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTLS) at Concordia University has been instrumental and inspirational in getting a number of professors at the department of Electrical and Computer Engineering (ECE) to think of teaching as a profession and take some significant steps to improve their professionalism in the area of education.

The Instructional Methods Committee (IMC) of our department was initiated by myself in response to a need for improved use of technology in education (among other things). The CTLS has been supremely supportive in that they organized not one, but two full-fledged seminars, under the aegis of the IMC within the department. Indeed, the head of CTLS participated in both seminars. In addition to the above, CTLS responded to queries and requests for help coming from the professors without delay, and offered us use of their library of limited, but carefully chosen instructional videos and books.

I can only say that they have done everything possible to encourage educational innovation at our department and support it where it exists. It is my view that what is really hindering the full deployment of their resources is the lack of motivation (on the part of the professor population at large) to allocate more time and effort to teaching in general. Yours Sincerely,

Nawwaf KHARMA, Ph.D. (London)  
Assistant Professor  
Electrical & Computer Engineering Dept.  
Concordia University

August 4, 2004

### Utilization of Faculty Teaching Development Program

I have tried to take as much advantage as possible of the Faculty Teaching Development Program as they have had a significant impact on my teaching as they are highly beneficial. The list of seminars I have attended includes:

- Teaching with Case Method
- Hyper-media Assisted Instruction
- Adding Colour
- First Day
- Developing questioning skills
- Infusing creative thinking
- Teaching dossier
- Gathering Images
- Grading process
- One day instructional

In addition, I have attended a series of department seminars. During these, members of the Center for Teaching and Learning have participated every year. These seminars have enabled us to get the department to discuss with each other about teaching methods and practices within the classes.

Some of these include:

- Site generator for teaching applications
- MATHCAD
- Critical thinking
- IT seminar on teaching
- Web CT

The orientation to new faculty was also very helpful as it provided the first and most comprehensive overview of the university and each faculty. This information would have been difficult to obtain otherwise. It also gives an opportunity to meet with recently hired professors and learn advice from them.

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These instructional workshops have expanded my knowledge of teaching substantially over the past 5 years which was initially quite minimal. They also allow me to discuss teaching aspects with others in the workshops. These workshops have shown me ways to incorporate more group work and interesting activities in the class and to improve my teaching and the learning by the class. The workshops have also enabled me to incorporate more computer technologies in the class and will continue to do so in the near future. In summary, they have been very informative and have had a significant and beneficial impact on my teaching.

Sincerely,

Catherine Mulligan, Ph.D., Eng.  
Associate Professor  
Dept. Building, Civil and Environmental Engineering, ER 303-19  
Concordia Research Chair in Environmental Engineering  
Tel: (514) 848-2424, ext 7925  
Fax: (514) 848-2809  
Email: mulligan@civil.concordia.ca



# Concordia

U N I V E R S I T Y

## Journalism Department

Tuesday, June 29, 2004

Dr. Martin Singer  
Provost  
Concordia University

Dear Dr. Singer;

I am writing you this letter to testify to the help and encouragement I have received over the years from the Centre for Teaching and Learning Services. I have taken nine teaching and research workshops offered by the Centre since 1994, when I began teaching at Concordia as a part-time instructor. These have included workshops on lecturing, grading, critical thinking, mounting a course-related Web site and accessing electronic research resources. In August, I am enrolled in the Centre's week-long course-development workshop. The CTLS has also staged discipline-specific teaching seminars for the Department of Journalism the last three years, which I have attended and profited from. In 2001, I was one of three faculty members in our department to receive a \$6,000 Faculty Teaching Development Grant from the Centre to develop a series of instructional videos to be used in journalism courses.

As you know, good teaching is much more difficult than it looks. I was not aware of how skilled my best university teachers had been until I tried to apply some of their methods myself; I thought they were simply actually naturally. The impact they had on me, however, has made me determined to learn how to become a better teacher, and the CTLS has played a large part in my progress toward that goal.

Most new faculty members arrive at Concordia with little or no teaching experience, and must learn very quickly the best methods to explain course material, how to develop stimulating exercises and assignments, how to handle different kinds of students and classroom situations. But like all learning, it is never really mastered, and must continue as curriculum materials change, as students change, as new courses arise. It is critical that faculty members have resources -- both human and material -- upon which to draw in an effort to become and remain effective classroom instructors.

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In my relatively short time at Concordia, I have learned very quickly that classroom instruction is highly valued by the university. The Centre for Teaching and Learning Services stands as concrete proof of that commitment. It provides teachers at all levels of experience with the skills, ideas and resources to give Concordia students the quality of teaching they need and deserve. I have found the staff at the CTLS to be very helpful and receptive to my own particular challenges.

In closing, let me say that I hope the university recognizes the central role played for the Centre for Teaching and Learning Services in maintaining the goal we all share of teaching excellence.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mike Gasher', with a large, stylized initial 'M' and a long, sweeping horizontal stroke at the end.

Mike Gasher, Ph.D.  
Associate Professor

Tel: 848-2424 ext. 2474  
E-mail: [gashmj@vax2.concordia.ca](mailto:gashmj@vax2.concordia.ca)

To whom it may concern:

Ms. Olivia Rovinescu has given three workshops on teaching to the Department of Computer Science. The first one was on the teaching of the Diploma Programme, the second one to our part-time instructors and the third one was a workshop for course coordinators and part-time teachers on the challenges of managing multi-section courses. Ms. Rovinescu quickly grasped the particular problems faced by the CS department, and she was able to design an excellent workshop that was very well tailored to our needs. The workshops were all well attended, and Ms. Rovinescu gave us insight and pointers on how to manage our wide spectrum of students, their different needs and expectations. We all benefited from her wisdom and experience. Her excellent work is appreciated by everybody who has come in contact with her, and, we will invite her back for more workshops in the future.

Dr. Gosta Grahne  
Associate Professor  
Computer Science

From the outset the Concordia Part-time Faculty Association has been active in supporting teaching and learning services to its members. This has only been possible because of the active support of the CTLS and the offices of the Provost. To this end, we are most grateful for the services CTLS and the Provost's Offices have provided our members for the last fifteen years.

The importance of being able to use the services of CTLS can not be underestimated. We have been able over the years to:

1. Advertise and mail all information about workshops and the CTLS services to members in the CUPFA Newsletter at least once a year.
2. Articles about good teaching and learning methods have been written in the CUPFA newsletter that were specific to new challenges (larger classrooms, the new technologies, etc.).
3. Encourage Chairs to refer part-time faculty members directly to CTLS.
4. Participate and develop on the Provost's Course Evaluation Committee teaching criteria and just one new course evaluation for part-time faculty that is consistent and used throughout the University. Given the formative (as opposed to summative) nature of the course evaluation more part-time faculty members have been responsive to student comments on the course evaluations themselves and less resistant to using the services of CTLS more directly. This has enhanced the approach of part-time faculty towards their teaching responsibilities and has enhanced a more positive use of the services provided by CTLS.
5. Creation of part-time faculty members who are now facilitators with teaching workshops. Members who have become "trained" in providing workshops to enhance teaching and learning directly.
6. Development of teacher orientation workshops geared at specific groups of part-time faculty. Comprehensive planning of these workshops brought together an innovative approach to enhancing teaching and learning. Evaluations of these orientation workshops were deemed positives by both the Deans in Engineering and Computer Science and in JMSB. They both supported the specifically designed workshops for all new part-time faculty teaching in their Faculties for the first time. Here is a list of the full-day workshops that have been conducted:
  - a) For all part-time faculty members, a full day orientation workshop that embraced and used the services of: CTLS, Advocacy, Office for Student with Disabilities and CUPFA. Two of these workshops were organised and in this manner brought together all the services in the University related to addressing the needs of students: teaching, learning, special educational needs, etc.
  - b) Three workshops organized for new or first-time teachers only (those with less than 30 credits of seniority) with the following new part-time faculty members from: Arts and Science, JMSB, and Engineering and Computer Science.
  - c) One workshop organized specifically on the problems of evaluating student work in the Faculty of Fine Arts.

## IMPACT

- 1) greater cooperation between the CUPFA and CTLS
- 2) greater use and little resistance in the use of CTLS by individual part-time faculty members
- 3) improved referral of part-time faculty members to CTLS by Dept. Chairs
- 4) improved teaching and improved knowledge of available services in the University as a whole (Advocacy Services, Office for Students with Learning Disabilities, IITS, CTLS, etc.) for first-time part-time faculty members
- 5) shift from summative to formative approaches with part-time faculty to focus on improved "learning" for students thus improving a understanding of the methodology of course evaluation criteria
- 6) trained CUPFA facilitators who are able to inturn provide enhanced workshops on teaching issues and subjects

The commitment from the Association to the enhancement of learning is evident in our continued support and organization of activities with CTLS but also with other stake-holding services in the University that will assist part-time faculty members in better serving their students (IITS with workshops in the new technologies, Advocacy Services, Office for Students with Learning Disabilities, etc.). Our approach has been a holistic one. We are very appreciative of the efforts of CTLS to meet our own objectives to improving the teaching and learning services the Association emphasizes with its own members. We will continue to organise and coordinate activities for new members and reinforce participation in the individual services provided by CTLS.

Maria Peluso,  
President, CUPFA

To whom it may concern:

I arrived at Concordia University in Fall 2003 as a new faculty member in the Department of Communication Studies. One of the first things I did was to take advantage of a range of excellent workshops offered by the CTLS, including the TLP. This particular program proved to be an especially wise choice, as it immediately provided me with a contact point that would allow me to reflect critically on the teaching experience I brought to Concordia, as well as the aspirations I have for my future here. Working together with the CTLS staff and a small number of faculty members with very diverse backgrounds and interests, we were able to spend time discussing very concrete teaching ideas and issues that are, in some senses, common to us all. It was also terrific to be able to report back to the group having actually incorporated some of these approaches in my own classes. Throughout the year the TLP has provided a creative and confidential environment in which to share experiences and anecdotes and to receive constructive support independent of my own departmental affiliation. I would unreservedly recommend the TLP to any faculty member regardless of their level of experience or seniority; it's a highly worthwhile opportunity to take a long, honest look at exactly who we are, what we project, and what we can ultimately achieve, when we step into the classroom.

Dr. Matthew Soar  
Department of Communication Studies  
Concordia University

E: msoar@alcor.concordia.ca  
T: (514) 848-2424 x2542

## Experience Report

I have always been driven by quests to disseminate my acquired knowledge to others to help achieve their career objectives. This thrust led me to take up an academic position after my doctoral studies. In my viewpoint, one develops his or her teaching skills based on personal experiences in taking courses from different professors over the tenure of undergraduate and graduate studies, and with this sort of mixed experiences and mindset, the person approaches to his or her teaching practices. I believe that teaching skills get ameliorated with practice, patience, and persistence.

I have been mostly responsible to teach senior and graduate level courses in the Electrical and Computer Engineering Department at Concordia. These courses generally deal with advanced topics in computer engineering. ECE students like and enjoy my teaching style and approach and it has been a pleasure experience so far. In the past, however, there have been a few (roughly 10-15%) who would not really appreciate the way I approached my teaching and learning objectives. The point that I sensed was that this group of students felt left out on their own to learn the subject materials. Some of the students felt that I was not patient enough to give them ample time to formulate their thoughts in order to give back answers to my in-class impromptu short questions. In my mind then, finishing up the course content within the lecture hour was utmost important, and that frequently led to rushing back to subject material immediately after few students responded to my questions. Over the period of first two years at Concordia, I always felt that I needed some mentoring in order to further enrich my teaching skills so as to accommodate most of my students to have them a pleasant and memorable learning experience. I am fortunate to have this opportunity to join the workshop offered by CTLS which was targeted to this specific concern.

Olivia Rovinescu and Rachel Devins organized and coordinated TLP Workshop for Concordia faculty members to bring out their difficulties and concerns in teaching to the floor and workout a solution collectively to address/tackle them. A group consisting of five faculty members from five different departments volunteered to participate in this workshop. I believe that this has been the most positive aspect of the group. Through these group interactions, I was able to appreciate the true meaning of teaching. It let me observe how would a non-engineering faculty member approach students to help them learn the subject matter in an enjoyable and interactive way. Over this 24 hours workshop, distributed over eight sessions over two consecutive terms, we had numerous opportunities to touch on various aspects of teaching skills. These sessions included mini-lectures, course-outline preparation, skill-sets needed for large classes, troubleshooting for some general and specific concerns, midterm evaluation, among others.

Personally, I have seen a great improvement in my own teaching experience/skills. This fact has been further substantiated by my course evaluations, as well. During the workshop and beyond, I restructured my lecture notes as per suggestions/tips gathered in the TLP workshop. The midterm evaluation form, which I prepared keeping specific personal concerns in mind, has been very much appreciated by students and some of them mentioned that they admired that I was concerned about their learning objectives and experiences. This non-official early evaluation of the course also gave me a chance to improve and steer the course in the right direction. Some of the mock lecture sessions, where the group members mimicked actual class room scenarios, were



quite useful. This sort of exercise helped me to get feedback from other members on my reactions to events that took place during the mock lecture. A few tips on what a lecture in general should contain and how to stimulate students to get interested in the topic of the day were quite useful. The notion of introducing *bridge-in* and *pre-test* is generally being overlooked by many of us whereas these are important for an effective teaching.

I would strongly recommend newer faculty members to participate in this extensive workshop early in their academic career. As many of us do not get an opportunity to teach a full-fledged course during our graduate studies, it is sometimes difficult to appreciate what it really takes to make an effective and remarkable teacher. Additionally, as *teaching* is independent of any discipline of study, it is an experience in itself to see how faculty members from other discipline approach to teach their students and then benefit from taking the best of all and incorporating them in personal teaching styles. CTLS has abundant online resources on teaching and one can really take advantage of it by borrowing reading materials from their office or browsing them online.

On a personal note, TLP in general, and Olivia and Rachel, in particular, have been a great help for me to reflect upon my own experience in teaching and to improve upon those limitations that were making me fall short in enjoying teaching and achieving personal satisfaction of being a good and effective teacher.

Dr. Pernendu Sinha,  
Assistant Professor, Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering

### Report on use of CTLS services

Over the last 3 years, I have mainly used 2 of the services provided by the CTLS - workshops and course evaluations.

As a new faculty member, I attended 4 workshops offered by the CTLS. These are listed below in chronological order:

#### Concordia University's New Faculty Orientation

This orientation provided basic information on teaching at Concordia, and was an excellent opportunity for new faculty members to get to know each other. In addition, I was made aware of what was expected of me as a faculty member.

#### Preparing your First Class

Very useful workshop providing specific information on how to prepare course outlines. I learned to treat the course outline as a contract between myself and the students. I have found that students appreciate this approach, and that they have a better understanding of their requirements. The workshop also focused on tone and pace for the first lecture and gave typical case studies which were extremely effective in demonstrating what not to do.

#### Program in University Teaching and Learning for New Faculty in Engineering and Computer Science

This 3-day intensive workshop was by far the most helpful event I have attended. Although I am not a fan of interactive teaching, it was used quite effectively in this workshop. During the three day course, some of the more senior Concordia faculty presented their views on teaching and the use of technology in the classroom - one professor from ECE showed how online material can be used to reinforce concepts covered in the lectures. Over the last couple of years I have used online material for my own courses (with some limited success).

A second focus of the three day workshop was to present theories on how students learn - a topic which I find extremely interesting. I would definitely suggest that the CTLS have more workshops/seminars on this topic.

#### The Teaching Dossier

With the constant demands on time, having a workshop dealing exclusively with preparing dossiers was extremely useful. The staff of the CTLS provided a generic outline and went over the key components of the dossier. They also provided links to resource information which proved very helpful when preparing my own dossier.

In addition, the course evaluations administered by the CTLS provide fast, and sometimes surprising, results regarding my own class performance. Personally I have used these evaluations (and in particular the student comment section) to tinker with the way I present my lectures. In particular I have slowed down my pace and provided more problem solving during class time (both of which were criticisms raised by some students). In addition, we are in the process of changing the textbooks for some

courses based on the results of the course evaluations. I have used the statistical data, provided in the evaluations, liberally in my own teaching dossier. The only small criticism I do have, relates to the inability to extract detailed information from the statistical data - for instance how the evaluations of a particular course have changed over the years or how statistics for 400 level courses compare. I have talked to the CTLS and they have mentioned that they are working on trying to upgrade the system to allow these types of queries - this will definitely improve the use the evaluations.

As a new faculty member I have found the services provided by the CTLS to be extremely helpful and would definitely recommend that more faculty members attend their workshops.

ROCCO DI GIROLAMO  
Electrical and Computer Engineering

## Olivia Rovinescu

---

**From:** Mr O. A. Pekau [oapekau@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** August 5, 2004 7:39 PM  
**To:** rovines@alcor.concordia.ca  
**Subject:** Ph.D. workshops

Dear Olivia

Please accept my thanks for the workshops which you have given to the Ph.D. graduate students in the Department of Building, Civil and Environmental Engineering during the past several years.

These workshops were exceptionally well done and effective. They have permitted our Ph.D. students to not only give effective research presentations themselves but also to be more effective in their teaching functions.

Based on the above I sincerely hope that you and your unit will continue to be able to provide us the service that you have provided thus far. Indeed, The Doctoral Seminar Course would not be as effective without your participation.

Sincerely,

O. A. Pekau  
Professor

---

Do you Yahoo!?

New and Improved Yahoo! Mail - 100MB free storage! [http://promotions.yahoo.com/new\\_mail](http://promotions.yahoo.com/new_mail)

**Olivia Rovinescu**

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**From:** Patrice Chalin [chalin@cs.concordia.ca]  
**Sent:** July 9, 2004 11:00 AM  
**To:** Olivia Rovinescu  
**Subject:** Re: Impact report

Olivia,

Feedback is provided below. Hopefully this will suite your needs. Let me know if I can be of further assistance.

Best regards,  
Patrice

---

I am a firm believer in active learning and the CTLS has been there to support and guide me as early on as 1989 when I was a lecturer (1989-1992). I recall back then having been informed of the programs at Syracuse University where they have (or had) open degrees in which students could proceed at their own pace. This, coupled with approaches to problem based learning (PBL), have stood out in my mind since then.

In 2002 I was hired as a professor (returning from industry). I was glad to see that the CTLS was still a very active member of the Concordia community. I have since regularly participated in CTLS seminars. In general I have come out of these seminars enriched. The seminars have helped me

- complement my external training in the area,
- reaffirm my commitment to an active style of teaching while,
- offering ideas about how to fine-tune my teaching techniques.

For example, these seminars have repeatedly reminded me how easy, effective and essential asking simple "flash" (i.e. 60sec) questions can be during lectures. The seminar on "teaching large classes" has helped me get through my 100 student project based courses.

Early on (most likely in the New Faculty Orientation Seminar), I was given a folder containing material from the CTLS. One of the sheets that has influenced me the most (in fact I have kept it in my work binder for the past 2 years up until last week!) is the Lesson Plan Template. I even created a Power Point lecture template based on this Lesson Plan Template that I used weekly.

Unfortunately, my increased responsibilities in the past ten months have meant that I have had to put aside a plan to better integrate PBL into my courses. I am hoping to be able to pursue this plan in the near future with the assistance of the CTLS.

Regards,  
Patrice Chalin

--

Patrice Chalin, Assistant Professor - <http://www.cs.concordia.ca/~chalin>  
Dept. of Computer Science and Software Engineering, Concordia University

09/07/2004

August 17, 2004

Olivia Rovinescu  
Director, Centre for Teaching and Learning Services  
Concordia University  
L-AD426  
Tel: 514-848-2498  
[rovines@alcor.concordia.ca](mailto:rovines@alcor.concordia.ca)

Dear Olivia,

I am writing to let you know how helpful the Centre for Teaching and Learning Services has been. I'm just now starting my first sabbatical, so I have time now to reflect on the last six years of teaching at Concordia University.

I was one of the first hires in a new technology area (time based arts and video) within the Faculty of Fine Arts. As a new faculty member, I found it helpful to work with your Centre to discuss strategies for teaching technology as an art-form. I found your Centre offered a valuable service, both in terms of offering workshops as well as one on one feedback and consultations. As a result, I've found teaching to be a richer, and more pleasurable activity. Concordia University's commitment to teaching through its support of the Teaching and Learning Services is important for both the faculty as well as the students.

Sincerely,

Leila Sujir  
Associate Professor  
Interdisciplinary Video Studies  
Studio Arts, Faculty of Fine Arts  
Concordia University  
1455 de Maisonneuve Blvd. W.  
Montreal, QC H3G 1M8  
Phone at Hexagram video lab: (514) 848-4056  
email: [sujir@alcor.concordia.ca](mailto:sujir@alcor.concordia.ca)

## Impact Report

CTLS has been most supportive of our teaching activities in the Faculty of Fine Arts. Both our full-time and part-time instructors have participated fully in the instructional sessions offered by CTLS and have found them to be most helpful. Beginning four years ago, Olivia Rovinescu has given an orientation session to our doctoral students who teach Art History courses. This session takes place in the Spring after the students have been assigned a course to teach and when they are about to start preparations for the course. Specifically directed to first-time teachers, these sessions explore what constitutes excellent teaching and provides a forum to discuss different strategies for designing and delivering lectures and encouraging class participation. The doctoral students come away from this session with a better understanding of teaching skills, and the knowledge that there are other workshops they can attend later to ameliorate their teaching practice. As well, they begin to develop a sense of confidence in their own abilities and are made aware that should they encounter difficulties CTLS can be of assistance.

CTLS has also been most supportive when there have been problems in the classroom. For example, when the Chair of Art History received complaints about the teaching style of one of our doctoral students, CTLS was able to intervene, observing the teacher in a non-threatening way and offering her advice about how to improve. In the process, the doctoral student came to realize that her teaching style reflected the severity of her own experiences, having grown up in eastern Europe, and that this approach was inappropriate to a Canadian university. With the careful intervention of CTLS, she has since become an exceptionally fine teacher.

I should mention that having served on the Advisory committee of CTLS as the Faculty of Fine Arts representative, I have had the opportunity to learn about the active participation of CTLS across the university. This in turn has led to the Faculty of Fine Arts' fuller use of the services CTLS provides: participation in the CTLS's website on teaching techniques as well as orientation sessions for student teachers in the other sectors of Fine Arts.

We have also benefited from the grants that CTLS used to offer for specific projects. The website on reference and research sources for Canadian art continues to be an important resource for our faculty and students. As well, the initial funding for a pilot video on the Canadian artists Ozias Leduc has led to a six-part video series, entitled Canada: A Portrait of the Land, with Art History professor, Dr. Francois-Marc Gagnon, Chair of the Stephen A. and Gail Jarislowsky Institute for Studies in Canadian Art. Most recently, funds from the McConnell project, have contributed to a range of innovative interactive teaching tools for Design Art, Art History, Printmaking and Art Education. The Canadian Art Documents website, for example, will give students access to rare publications, archival material and visual images, and through a variety of interactive approaches introduce the students to the many uses of primary sources.

CTLS continues to enrich the pedagogical fabric of the Faculty of Fine Arts. It is remarkable that this small group of dedicated professionals can accomplish so much. Most importantly, Olivia and her staff are sensitive, approachable, and flexible, always ready to assist with advice and action as needed, to help us to become the best of teachers.

Loren Lerner,  
Chair and Associate Professor  
Department of Art History



## APPENDIX B

**Budget Allotted for 2004/2005**  
**Center for Teaching and Learning Services**

<b>Salaries</b>	
Professional – Permanent( Director, Teaching Consultant)	124,071
Professional Contract (Instructional Developer)	40,040
Office Support – Permanent (Office Manager)	28,108
Office Support - Casual	3,000
Benefits (all)	38,065
<b>Total personnel costs</b>	<b>233,284</b>
<b>Expenses</b>	
Direct Expenditures – individuals (Visiting lecturers, Conferences, promotional and internal meeting expenses, training, other professional fees)	23,313
Supplies and Services (Stationery and office supplies, computer, convenience, books, periodical subscriptions, postage, printing, photocopies, telephone)	13,535
Capital expenditures	2, 500
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>272,632</b>

\*

**Course evaluation proposed budget  
ESTIMATE FOR 2004-2005**

<b>EXPENSES</b>	
<b>Personnel costs</b>	
Course Evaluation Coordinator	30,854
Contract staff (clerical)	15,000
Casual staff (typing)	25,000
Casual staff (scanning)	12,000
Benefits (all)	10,348
<b>Total personnel costs</b>	<b>93,202</b>
<b>Non-personnel costs</b>	
Printing - external	
A&S (2x22,000 @ \$115.20/1,000 & 1x26,000 @ \$105.20/1,000 + QST)	8,428
ENCS (21,000 @ \$117.20/1,000 + QST)	2,658
JMSB (27,000 @ \$105.40/1,000 + QST)	3,073
FA (6,000 @ \$223.50/1,000 + QST)	1,448
CUPFA (90,000 @ \$72.20/1,000 + QST)	7,018
Photocopying	2,500
Stationery, office supplies	2,500
Computer supplies	1,500
Telephone	800
<b>Total non-personnel costs</b>	<b>29,925</b>
<b>REVENUE</b>	
Cost recovery for typing from Faculties	-30,000
Cost recovery paid by ContEd	-5,000
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>91,827</b>
CTLS Present budget allocation for course evaluation	56,421
Overage	31,706

**ADDITIONAL COSTS**

**\*CTLS Director time (5%) and Office Manager time (10%) not included**

\*IITS Programmer time 50% of time not included

\*\*Cost of ContEd printing not included (paid by them)

\*\*Start-up cost of 2 plates for A&S not included (\$1,750)

\*\*\*With a system in place for bulk purchasing and bulk storage, questionnaires could be ordered for a 3-year period reducing the unit prices for external printing

with a probable saving over a 3-year period of around \$10,000

\*\*\*If written comments are no longer typed up, but questionnaires returned to professors once they have been scanned for statistical purposes, then the personnel costs would be reduced with a saving to the Faculties of \$30,000



## APPENDIX C

OIC!  
25/04/03

## Internal Memorandum

**To:** Dr. Jack Lightstone, Provost  
**From:** Olivia Rovinescu, Director, Center for Teaching and Learning Services  
**Date:** April 7, 2003  
**Re:** Proposed use of Teaching Enhancement Account WDV999

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As reported in the recent CTLS Progress Report, we surveyed participants at the 2002 New Faculty Orientation as a first step in establishing a database on their collective and individual teaching needs. The results confirm our present focus on providing more web-based resources, and continued enrichment of CTLS services to help faculty effectively use the Web and multimedia for teaching and learning. Also, in keeping with the transformative goals of the McConnell Project and stated needs of the Faculties, we are working to re-conceptualize our role in the University and our approach to faculty development. As faculty work changes and transforms, so must ours.

This proposal for enriched CTLS services is written with the above priorities in mind, spending the funds available (\$122,300) in phases over the next three years, as estimated in the attached budget. Our ongoing commitment is to produce artifacts that the university will be proud of, to engage in partnerships that will deepen our knowledge of faculty needs, and to introduce processes that will enable us to be more accountable as well as strengthen our impact on the university's teaching mission.

It should be noted that this enrichment proposal is in keeping with the SCAPP priorities in regard to supporting and retaining graduate students. The proposal will provide both financial and the intellectual support for graduate students, providing them with an apprenticeship opportunity that will benefit them as well as the university.

### 1. Support for web-based resources

The new CTLS web site [www.concordia.ca/ctls](http://www.concordia.ca/ctls) is the first stage of an ongoing project to provide comprehensive web-based teaching and learning resources to support our faculty development programs. We have initiated a video project: "Teaching Dialogues" with McConnell funds to collect artifacts of faculty using innovative teaching strategies and technologies effectively. This project is in collaboration graduate students in the Educational Technology Program. The videos can be viewed on the CTLS web site: <http://web2.concordia.ca/ctls/resources/videos.shtml> thus offering an alternative for busy faculty who do not have time to visit each other's classes or do not feel comfortable doing so. These short videos profile Concordia professors across the disciplines in their classroom and in dialogue with us. Our aim is to feature and recognize the work of experienced faculty while providing new faculty members with the opportunity to view their colleagues in the classroom and reflecting on their teaching philosophy. This is an



opportunity to create a new culture of sharing expertise and articulating teaching improvement.

I propose we make an ongoing commitment to this project. The videos, complemented with example course outlines, curriculum materials, and teaching philosophy statements, as well as more detailed explanations of different teaching strategies, offer an innovative and multi-purpose enrichment to CTLS web-based resources.

Further expansion of our service, as described requires technical support. To this end, my recommendation is that we work in close collaboration with the Educational Technology and Design Art departments and hire students to work with us to provide the required support to create learning objects to be utilized in the delivery of our workshops, so as to help us model more effectively, the pedagogically sound uses of technology (see attached example).

Approximate budget \$20,000 x 3 years.

## **2. Support for new graduate seminar in university teaching**

Another project that CTLS has embarked on is to prepare PhD students for an academic teaching career. To this end, a pilot non-credit graduate seminar in university teaching has been proposed for the next academic year. Students will examine current issues relating to teaching and learning in higher education, and develop competence in making instructional decisions appropriate to their domain. An integral goal of the seminar will be to model and reflect on good practice both in the classroom and in an online learning environment. Assistance will be needed in the development of a course web site, preparation of course materials and general coordination, (as depending on the students who register we might have several discipline-specific streams). To this end, I propose to hire a coordinator and at least one teaching assistant.

Approximate budget \$5,000 x 3 years.

## **3. Support for new course design institute**

Given the influx of new faculty, I propose that we make an ongoing commitment to providing pedagogical support to faculty engaging in technology-based projects beyond the McConnell funding. This could involve developing an intensive Course Design Institute similar to an intensive workshop offered at McGill and Simon Fraser that has been successfully running at McGill for the past 10 years and at SFU for 4 years (see attached flyers). Implemented at Concordia, it would represent a significant addition to our faculty development programs. This workshop is also at the core of a current SSHRC research grant held by Cheryl Amunsden (SFU), Cynthia Weston (McGill), and Phil Abrami (Concordia), titled: *A faculty development approach that focuses on learning for*

*the effective integration of technology in higher education.* One objective of this research is to involve faculty at the three universities in developing and implementing "learning-centered" technology plans. This could involve teaming graduate students up with faculty interested in engaging in formal or informal course design experiments. The more we can understand about teaching and learning across the disciplines, the greater our credibility and quality of services.

Our hope is that the participants of the Institute will then form a Faculty Development Network which can develop collaborative, innovative research-based approaches to faculty development and identify mechanisms to integrate them within their disciplines.

I have been in discussion with Dr. Phil Abrami about CTLS partnering with CSLP in implementing a Course Design Institute and collaborating on research that would inform faculty development at Concordia. This kind of research is an integral function of most faculty development centres at other universities. Even though our mandate at CTLS is service-oriented, participating in research in higher education with CSLP would enable us to provide services born out of scholarship. This is the model at other strong centers for faculty development. To this end, I propose allocating funds for coordinating and implementing this project which will involve developing course materials, planning, and coordination with CSLP, McGill and Simon Fraser as well as follow up with faculty who have participated in the Institute

Approximate budget: \$10,000 x 3 years for coordination by PhD student  
5,000 x 3 years for student technology assistants and materials

#### **4. Support for new database for tracking new faculty**

CTLS wants to establish a database for tracking new faculty and their teaching development. With the assistance of the new Mentoring Coordinator in the Office of Research, needs assessment interviews have been conducted with all new faculty. The results of these interviews will be entered into a database to enable us to determine patterns of teaching needs across groups of faculty. It will also enable us to analyze individual needs for follow up interventions. Tracking faculty over time will provide useful information to the university at large. To this end, I propose allocating funds for database construction.

Approximate budget \$3,000 x 1 year

**Proposal for the use of  
Teaching Enhancement Account WDV999**

**Year 2003-2004**

\$ 20, 000 Support for Web based resources  
\$ 5, 000 Support for new graduate seminar in University Teaching  
\$ 15, 000 Support for new Course Design Institute  
\$ 3, 000 Support for database for tracking new faculty

---

\$43, 000

**Year 2004-2005**

\$ 20, 000 Support for Web based resources  
\$ 5, 000 Support for Graduate Seminar in University Teaching  
\$ 15, 000 Support for Course Design Institute

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\$40, 500

**Year 2005-2006**

\$ 20, 000 Support for Web based resources  
\$ 5, 000 Support for Graduate Seminar in University Teaching  
\$ 15, 000 Support for Course Design Institute

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\$40,000



## APPENDIX D

# APPENDIX D: PARTICIPATION IN CTLS WORKSHOPS BY FACULTY

2001-2002	Faculty					
Title	A&S	ENCS	FA	JMSB	Other	Total
3-Day Instructional Skills Workshop	4		1			5
3-Day Instructional Skills Workshop	3			4		7
Effective Strategies in Electronic Research (LIB)	2	2	1	2	1	8
Grading and Giving Feedback	8	1	1	3		13
Hypermedia-assisted Instruction in Engineering Education		19			1	20
Infusing Critical Thinking into Instruction	3	1	2			6
Learning By Doing Online	11	2	2	4	1	20
Learning Objects	11	3	1	3	3	21
Learning to do Basic HTML (IITS)	10	2	4	5	5	26
Managing Discussions	4	1	3			8
PowerPoint Clinic (IITS)	4	2	1	7		14
Preparing Your Teaching Dossier	4	4	2	1		11
Preventing Plagiarism	6	1	1	4	3	15
Strategies for Teaching & Assessing	3	2		3	2	10
Teaching with the Case Method	1			5		6
The Classroom of the Future	2		2			4
What WebCT Can do for you (IITS)	12	6	1	7		26
Writing a Letter of Recommendation	4	2	3			9
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>229</b>

2002-2003	Faculty					
Title	A&S	ENCS	FA	JMSB	Other	Total
1-Day Instructional Skills Workshop	3	3		2		8
3-Day Instructional Skills Workshop	5	1				6
Advanced PowerPoint (IITS)	4	2	1	4	2	13
Developing a Teaching Philosophy	5	2	4			11
Developing Questioning Techniques	5	3	2		1	11
Getting off on the Right Foot	6	1		2		9
Graduate Student Supervision	7	2		2		11
Infusing Critical Thinking into Instruction	3	1	1		2	7
Introduction To Endnote (LIB)	6	2		1	8	17
Learning Styles and Motivation	2	3		1		6
Motivational Strategies for Disruptive Behavior	4	1	2	1		8
Preparing Your Teaching Dossier	11	6	4	3	1	25
Preventing Plagiarism	15		1	9	4	29
Why We Like Technology-assisted Teaching	3	1			1	5
Research Databases, E-Journals	12	3			3	18
Sharpening Your PowerPoint Skills (IITS)	5	2		2	1	10
Standard American English for Non-Natives		10		1		11
Teaching Large Classes	14	5		4		23
Teaching with the Case Method	2	3		1		6
Thinking Outside the Box	2	6	1	1		10
Using Concept Mapping	4	3	2		1	10
Web-enhanced Teaching (IITS)	8	3	1	4	2	18
Writing a Letter of Recommendation	5	3		1		9
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>284</b>

**APPENDIX D CONTINUED: PARTICIPATION IN CTLS WORKSHOPS BY FACULTY**

<b>2003-2004</b>	<b>Faculty</b>					
<b>Title</b>	<b>A&amp;S</b>	<b>ENCS</b>	<b>FA</b>	<b>JMSB</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Total</b>
2-Day Teaching & Learning Practicum	4	1		1		6
3-Day Instructional Skills Workshop	4				1	5
3-Day Teaching & Learning Practicum	1		1	1	1	4
3M Series-Alex Fancy	7	3	1	3	10	24
3M Series-Clarissa Green	11	2		2	6	21
3M Series-Michael Moore	7	2		1	11	21
Assessing Student Learning	4		1	2		7
Classroom Decorum	9	3	1	4		17
Electronic Classroom Performance System	2	6		2	1	11
Infusing Critical Thinking into Instruction	8	2		2		12
Designing a PBL Course	3	2		1	1	7
Developing Content for Your Course Website	7	1	3	3	2	16
Giving and Receiving Feedback	3					3
PowerPoint 1 (IITS)	3		1	2		6
PowerPoint 2 (IITS)	1	2	2	1		6
PowerPoint Clinic (IITS)	1	2		1		4
Preparing Your Teaching Dossier	16	3	2	3		24
Preventing Plagiarism	6	1	2	1		10
Staging Simulations	1				1	2
Standard American English for Non-Native English Speakers	6	4				10
Teaching Students with Disabilities (OSD)	1	1	1			3
Technology Feats & Failures	9		1	6		16
Ultimate Brainstorm	2	1		1	3	7
Understanding Information Literacy (LIB)	5				1	6
Using Small Groups	4	1	1			6
Web-Enhanced Teaching (IITS)	9	1	1	1		12
Writing a Letter of Recommendation	8		1	1		10
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>275</b>



## APPENDIX E

## TEACHING & LEARNING RESOURCES

### *videos on teaching*

- ▶ [Academic integrity](#)
- ▶ [Assessing student learning](#)
- ▶ [Assessing your teaching](#)
- ▶ [Content-specific links](#)
- ▶ [Course planning & management](#)
- ▶ [How students learn](#)
- ▶ [Searchable databases](#)
- ▶ [Teaching dossier](#)
- ▶ [Teaching students with disabilities](#)
- ▶ [Teaching techniques](#)
- ▶ [Teaching with technology](#)
- ▶ [Videos on teaching](#)
- ▶ [Workshop handouts & CTLS resources](#)

We are pleased to present our video series **Teaching Dialogues**. Produced by Jonah Tozman, a recent graduate of Concordia's Educational Technology program, these videos profile Concordia faculty using innovative teaching strategies and technologies. There are currently 11 short videos in the series and more are in development. Click on the links below to view each video.

Click here for [viewing instructions](#).



View video:  
[QuickTime](#)  
[RealOne](#)

#### CONNECTING TO STUDENTS

##### Dr. Sheila Mason, Associate Professor **Philosophy**

In Dr. Sheila Mason's Philosophy of Leisure course, she artfully makes the intangibility of philosophy concrete and meaningful by connecting philosophical ideas with every day experience. With compassion for her students and their learning, Dr. Mason uses lively class discussions, unusual outside sources, and impassioned lectures to create a dynamic learning environment.

**Length** - 15 minutes

**CTLS**  
 Home

About CTLS

Current  
Workshop Series

Faculty & TA Services

Online Journals

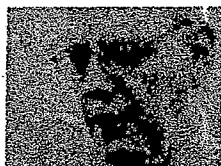
Teaching &  
Learning Resources

University  
Teaching Centres  
& Organizations

Feedback



**Concordia**  
 UNIVERSITY



View video:

[QuickTime](#)

[RealOne](#)

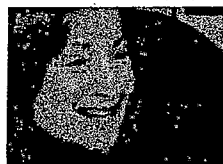
### LECTURING WITH STYLE

Dr. Martin Singer, Professor and Provost

#### History

Teaching fairly large classes, Dr. Singer uses technology and performance to enhance his courses. Dr. Singer discusses his style of lecturing and emphasizes its importance in the classroom. Watch him as he talks about how streaming his course over the Web using Site Generator affects students' learning.

**Length - 15 minutes**



View video:

[QuickTime](#)

[RealOne](#)

### SIMULATE AND STIMULATE

Linda Kay, Director of Graduate Program

#### Journalism

Linda Kay discusses her use of a simulated event in the classroom to teach students about spot news. The simulation of a fire in an art gallery provokes thought, discussion and experiential learning. It also serves as a useful reference point for the rest of the semester. In this video, Prof. Kay describes the simulation and gives a few pointers on how to make this activity as effective as possible.

**Length - 11 minutes**



View video:

[QuickTime](#)

[RealOne](#)

### EFFECTIVE GROUPWORK

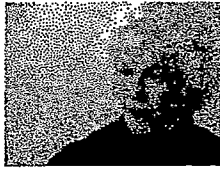
Dr. Bluma Litner, Assistant Professor

#### Applied Human Sciences

Dr. Bluma Litner is a professor in the Applied Human Sciences and a 3M teaching award winner. Bluma discusses the importance of groupwork in her class and how she uses activities such as roleplay to help build learning communities. Her passion for teaching is clearly evident and rivals only her passion for her students' learning process. Watch her talk about her teaching philosophy and give tips on creating effective group skills.

**Length - 15 minutes**





View video:

[QuickTime](#)

[RealOne](#)

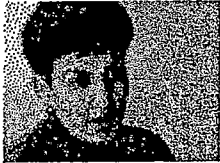
## ANIMATING YOUR CLASSROOM

Dr. Maureen Gowing, Assistant Professor

### **Accountancy**

Dr. Gowing discusses how her course is centered on three concepts: epistemology, ethics, and economics. To get her students to understand the role of accountants in a fair and efficient economy, she gets her students to construct and present images that depict/represent their views on the subject. Developing both sides of the brain is important in developing a holistic understanding of subject matter.

**Length** - 14 minutes



View video:

[QuickTime](#)

[RealOne](#)

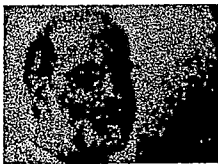
## GETTING STUDENTS ENGAGED

Nancy Acemian, Lecturer

### **Computer Science**

Prof. Acemian uses the Web to enhance classroom learning and participation. She discusses how to lay the ground rules for students on the first day of class, and how she uses metaphors when teaching a new concept to help relate material to the learners in a way that they understand. Generating participation during the lectures can be an effective teaching tool and help students get engaged and exhibit understanding of the material.

**Length** - 14 minutes



View video:

[QuickTime](#)

[RealOne](#)

## GETTING STUDENTS TO UNDERSTAND

Dr. Peter Grogono, Associate

### **Chair of Computer Science, Computer Programming Languages.**

Discusses his techniques in getting students to understand course content instead of merely memorizing it. His strategies include catering to both top-down and bottom-up learners, making effective use of media at hand (i.e., blackboard, overhead projector, etc.), and creating appropriate assignment and exam questions.

**Length** - 14 minutes



View video:

[QuickTime](#)

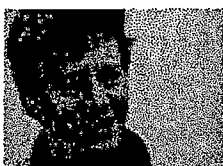
[RealOne](#)

### IMPROVING VISUAL REPRESENTATION

Dr. Sylvia Ruby, Professor of Histology,  
**Biology department.**

Demonstrates how to improve the visual representation of three-dimensional objects in the minds of students (using a bag of oranges!). Her philosophy is based on: setting up a positive learning environment, linking subject matter to the real world, linking new concepts with previous knowledge, and keeping communication lines open.

**Length** - 14 minutes



View video:

[QuickTime](#)

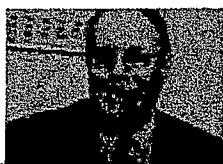
[RealOne](#)

### TAKING THE CLASS HOME

Dr. Leslie Landsberger, Associate Professor  
**Electrical and Computer Engineering.**

Describes the development of web-based aids (animations, interactive learning objects) used in a course in discrete mathematics to teach necessary prerequisite knowledge efficiently, and to empower students to ask questions.

**Length** - 10 minutes



View video:

[QuickTime](#)

[RealOne](#)

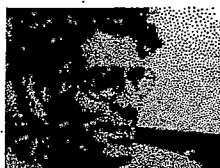
### TEACHING LINEAR ALGEBRA WITH TECHNOLOGY

Dr. Fred Szabo, Professor  
**Mathematics and Statistics.**

Describes the opportunities for non-linear teaching and learning inherent in technology. He teaches a course in linear algebra interactively in a computer lab using Scientific Notebook, and supports student learning on-line using lecture notes, quizzes, tests, discussion and 24/7 teaching assistance.

**Length** - 13 minutes





View video:

[QuickTime](#)

[RealOne](#)

## THE ART & SCIENCE OF ENGINEERING EDUCATION

Dr. Georgios Vatistas, Professor

**Mechanical and Industrial Engineering.**

Demonstrates how his teaching is grounded in the belief that students need "waking-up" on the first day of class to the goals of higher education. His philosophy of teaching also includes the need for real world examples and metaphors borrowed from across the disciplines. [Read more](#) [PDF]

**Length** - 13 minutes

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Last update: July 14, 2004

[Centre for Teaching and Learning Services](#)

[Concordia University](#)

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## APPENDIX F

# **An Innovative Approach to Enhancing Student Learning Through Multilevel Teaching**

Centre for Teaching and Learning Services

Draft: August 19, 2004

## **Executive summary**

This proposal is an integrated approach to faculty and student support that responds to an important challenge facing Concordia: our students' breadth of ability. Several university centres will collaborate in a concerted and coordinated effort to meet this challenge from the dual perspectives of faculty and students. Faculty support will involve the training of professors and teaching assistants to provide Multilevel Teaching; that is diverse pedagogical and curriculum approaches that adapt to the learner thus allowing students flexible means to achieve academic success. Student support will involve supplemental and remedial activities in several key areas, as appropriate. Another piece of this holistic approach to teaching and learning will focus on the use of technology as a tool for synergy. This proposal also hopes to provide added value to CTLS and Concordia by seeking external funding, to undertake a larger, more refined and sophisticated project that will include state-of-the-art research and development.

Concordia University, like most postsecondary institutions, currently faces both challenges and opportunities. As an institution that prides itself on accessibility, Concordia faces the old challenges of finding ways to deal effectively with student diversity, not only in the ethnicity and age of learners, but also in the skills, aptitudes, and orientations that they bring to our classrooms. Concordia also faces new opportunities such as a vibrant and young faculty, a commitment to technology integration, an administration dedicated to innovation and excellence, and research and service centres committed to student support and faculty development.

Students who come to Concordia attend for the unique and excellent programs of study offered by the institution. They are diverse learners with a wide range of backgrounds, experiences, interests, and abilities. Many are part-time students with familial and job responsibilities; some are returning to tertiary education after an absence of time or for a second chance; increasingly, students speak English as a second, third or fourth language and have different learning experiences and background skills. But they are all here to learn and achieve the recognition and rewards, both internal and external, that achievement at the postsecondary level provides. They may lack the skills, and sometimes the will, to succeed.



According to the Office of Institutional Research, the number of undergraduate students as of Winter 2003 was 5,026; the number graduating was 2,820; and the number dropping out was 1,857. This represents a drop out rate of 36.9%. This is the first gap this proposal aims to address.

The dawn of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century was also the dawn of a new era in Concordia's faculty. A host of new academics joined our ranks and others continue to be hired. With a renewed emphasis on research, these new faculty face not only the challenges of scholarly productivity but also the challenges of teaching in a culture where they may have little experience. These faculty members are eager, gifted, and bright, ready to accept the challenges of providing students an excellent education. But they may lack the tools and know-how to succeed. At the same time, we have a core of established faculty, many of whom are struggling with the diverse and changing student population. We do not have accurate statistics but know that a high percentage of courses are rated poorly due to the lack of communication and organizational skills of professors. Like other Canadian universities, Concordia needs a total recommitment to teaching. This is the second gap this proposal aims to address.

A preliminary survey of Chairs conducted by the CTLS also confirms that the most important challenge in teaching facing both full-time and part-time faculty and a growing contingent of graduate teaching assistants is our students' breadth of ability, background experience, motivation, and willingness/availability for learning. How do we design instruction and assessment that is sensitive to this variation? How do we develop critical and creative thinking at different levels of ability? What are effective professors doing across the disciplines? What innovative strategies can be developed taking advantage of technology? Another piece of this holistic approach to teaching and learning will focus on the use of technology as a tool for synergy.

Several university centres will collaborate in a concerted and coordinated effort to meet the challenges from the dual perspectives of faculty and students. This proposal is, therefore, an attempt to use technology to enhance learning and to provide distinct forms of support to faculty and students.

### **Faculty support**

Faculty support will involve the training of faculty to provide Multilevel Teaching; that is diverse pedagogical and curriculum approaches that adapt to the learner thus allowing students flexible means to achieve academic excellence; optimizing how they learn and enhancing the quality and quantity of what they learn. It is important to note that our approach to Multilevel Teaching does not change the standards by which students are judged except to create the expectation of increased student success.

Multilevel Teaching is an approach to student-centred learning that recognizes the need for successful instruction to accommodate student diversity. It emphasizes varied instructional strategies like problem-based learning and collaborative learning which provide a high degree of student involvement around complex, multifaceted and meaningful problems. It provides alternatives to the use of lecture-based, information transmission approaches to teaching in favor of knowledge construction approaches to learning. It draws on empirically based principles of learner-centered education prepared by the American Psychological Association, the National Science Foundation, and leading scholars in higher education. Technology will be used to support content exploration and peer communication. Technology will also be used to review, explore, and elaborate on key curricular content, as well as to link the learner with learning strategies and student supports.

At the same time, we recognize that many faculty members are committed to lecturing as a basic approach to undergraduate and graduate instruction. It may be seen as the most efficient use of faculty time and the most appropriate way of transmitting information. Therefore, another approach we will take is to support and refine lecturing to be more adaptive to student diversity. This may include modifying the way information is presented in classes and using web-enhanced technology to augment student learning outside of class. For example, lectures can be modified with greater attention paid to advance organizers, concept maps (hierarchical representations of key material), and summaries to ensure that key concepts are highlighted. We can also introduce in-class strategies, such as reciprocal peer teaching which emphasize taking the time during class for students to briefly explain and elaborate their understanding, and making greater use of visual representations and graphical demonstrations to accommodate students with different linguistic abilities and learning styles (this is where various university services and expertise can be brought to bear to help faculty find these tools).

### **Student support**

Student support will involve supplemental and remedial activities in several key areas, as appropriate: a) learning strategies and skills training; b) literacy training and help with second language reading and writing; c) numeracy training and help with mathematics and problem solving; d) time management; e) discipline-specific core competencies; f) information literacy (library skills); g) interpersonal, collaborative and life-long learning strategies (as specified by the Conference Board of Canada, 2000); and h) student motivation and learning goal orientation. The delivery of the support will vary and include: i) workshops; ii) counseling; and iii) on-line computer-based activities.

### An integrated approach

Under the leadership of the Provost and coordinated by the CTLS, this proposal draws together the services and expertise offered by a variety of units within the university. These include the four Faculties, Student Services, the Library, IITS, CSLP, the Institute for Co-operative Education, the Institute in Management and Community Development, and other sub units, e.g., Academic Technology, the IT unit of ENCS, Visual Media Resources in FA, and CIT. It hopes also to include, at least consultatively, student organizations, e.g., GSA. This integrated approach is depicted visually in Figure 1.

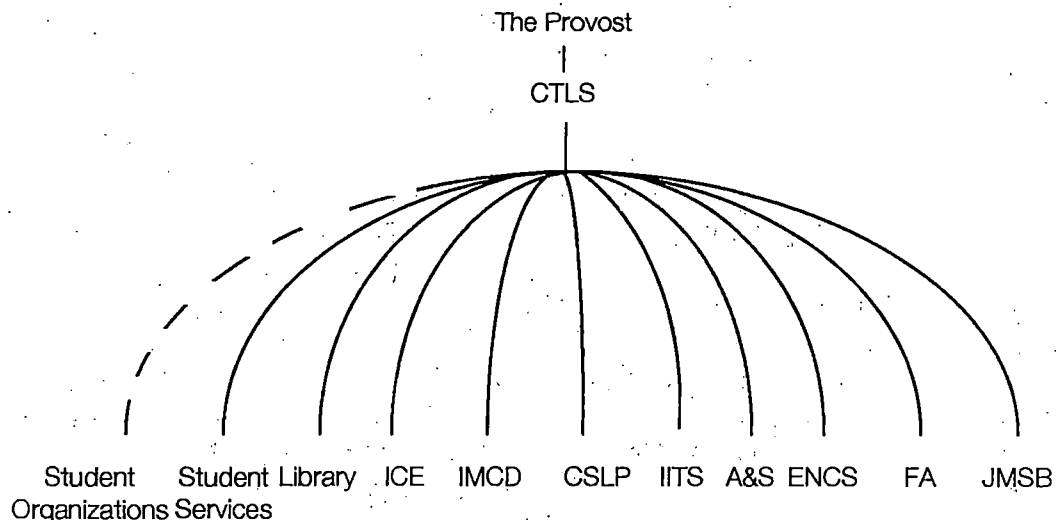


Figure 1: Services and Expertise to be involved in the MULTI Project

### Integral to CTLS mission

This proposal is highly relevant and appropriate for Concordia. It addresses the core mission of the University to provide real education for the real world and respects the diversity of its students and faculty by recognizing the need to be flexible in achieving excellence in teaching and learning while also recognizing that the standard of excellence must be continually raised. This proposal also recognizes that the CTLS is dedicated to faculty development through the application of well-established principles of teaching and learning and the search for new and better means to support growth and diversity. This is an outgrowth of the increasing success of the CTLS to network and bring together Faculties, departments and service units throughout the University.

This proposal also hopes to provide added value to CTLS and Concordia by seeking external funding, to undertake a larger, more refined and sophisticated project that will include state-of-the-art research and development. This larger project will not only enhance teaching and learning within the institution but also allow for resources

and products to be made available to external partners. We hope to increase our collaboration with CEGEPs, especially those that send a high percentage of students to Concordia (e.g., Dawson and Vanier) to improve the transition from collegial studies to university studies. This will result in an increase in the image, visibility and success of Concordia as a university that plays a leadership role in Canada and internationally in developing and improving the quality of teaching and learning at the post secondary level.

### **Schedule and Plan:**

#### **Pilot phase**

- Form internal partnerships to define the problem, share resources, and create solutions with the Administration, the four Faculties, Student Services, the Library, IITS, CSLP, the Institute for Co-operative Education, the Institute in Management and Community Development, and other sub units.
- Prototype development and proof of concept. For example, we will set out to work with a) a large class; b) a class where median grade is traditionally low; c) a class where dropout rate is high; and d) a class where all these conditions apply.
- Survey and interview students, faculty, and the Administration.
- Monitor to what extent existing strategies are being used at Concordia, how good they are, and what impact they have on students.
- Short-term, systematic literature reviews and reports on: 1) support approaches to issues in student diversity; 2) Multilevel Teaching processes and best practices that articulate a set of principles for success and necessary skills; 3) various learning resources to be used in Multilevel Teaching, especially the use of digital media.
- Exploration of partnerships with external groups, e.g., the CEGEPs, facultydevelopment.ca, STLHE, and other teaching development services in Canada.
- Research and development proposal for external funding and internal support (possible McConnell resubmission by the Provost).

#### **Introductory Phase**

- Establish a Multilevel Teaching Advisory Group (professors, students, and internal partners).
- Develop Multilevel Teaching resources, e.g., faculty and student diagnostic tools, course and lesson plan templates with examples, assessment rubrics, instructional videos, case studies, web resources, and student electronic portfolios.

- Select courses and professors for inclusion in the project based on assessment of targeted areas of need, e.g., large introductory classes in Engineering and Computer Science.
- Implement in selected courses and formatively evaluate component pieces of Multilevel Teaching resources.

### **Scale-up Phase**

- Launch a Multilevel Teaching Community of Practice and Website.
- Create an Institute for Multilevel Teaching (levels I and II) modeled on the CTLS Instructional Skills Workshop and Course Design and Teaching Workshop.
- Produce a Guide to Multilevel Teaching with descriptions from faculty of their experiences using this new approach to achieving their course learning outcomes. The guide will include case studies of principles and best practices in action and offer concrete tools, strategies, and tips for faculty and students.
- Infuse the concept of Multilevel Teaching into CTLS support for new faculty, workshops, individual consultations, and graduate student seminar.
- Research the effectiveness of Multilevel Teaching on student engagement, self-regulation, and course learning outcomes.
- Overall evaluation of impact and dissemination to other institutions in Canada and elsewhere.

### **External funding possibilities**

- Granting agencies, i.e., SSHRC, NSERC, FQRSC, CANARIE, Industry Canada, HRSDC, Campus Canada
- Foundations, i.e., McConnell Family Foundation, Spencer Foundation, GE Foundation, etc.
- Fundraising (work with Office of Advancement)





Monday, August 16, 2004 12:31:35 PM

Message

From: Cheryl Amundsen <cheryl\_amundsen@sfu.ca>  
Subject: Fwd: Profs get schooling on how to teach  
To: cynthia.weston@mcgill.ca  
lynn.mcalpine@mcgill.ca  
Phil Abrami  
Janette M. Barrington

---

>Hello - I don't forward much of this kind of thing -- but this is  
>from a Canadian newspaper. Cheryl

>-----  
>Profs get schooling on how to teach  
>As students demand better instruction for higher tuition fees, universities  
>feel the pressure

>Sarah Schmidt  
>CanWest News Service

>Vancouver Sun, August 12, 2004

>OTTAWA -- With students demanding more for their ever-rising tuition fees,  
>universities are finally taking action on one of their most enduring  
>challenges -- how to transform lab rats and book worms into dynamic  
>instructors.

>The University of Calgary is sending professors back to school this fall to  
>improve their craft. The new faculty certificate program comes after a  
>students' survey last spring pinpointed the quality of teaching as their top  
>priority. The University of British Columbia is about to open a research  
>institute devoted to university teaching, a first in Canada.

>Elsewhere, teaching support centres are finally expanding beyond one-man  
>shops so they can tutor the tutors on everything from voice training to how  
>to teach a large class.

>Many schools are also beginning to award teaching fellowships so professors  
>have the time to develop new teaching techniques or deepen their  
>understanding of the learning process.

>"The fundamental flaw in the whole system, of course, is we prepare our  
>future professoriate for research and we expect the teaching to happen on  
>the side," said Geraldine Van Gyn, director of the newly expanded Learning  
>and Teaching Centre at the University of Victoria.

>"If you've got a PhD in physics and you did your entire grad school in a lab  
>and all of a sudden the university gives you a class of 400 students -- this  
>is a pretty ominous task," added Carol Miles, director of Carleton  
>University's Educational Development Centre.

>"There's a rising consumerism in students and part of that is demanding good  
>teaching. Here's how much money I'm spending, this is what you're going to

>deliver to me," said Miles.

>There have always been occasional teaching gems, like Jan Minac, on every campus.

>For the last decade, the mathematician at the University of Western Ontario has used theatrical tricks to deliver more lively and memorable lectures. He says his students absorb the material better when he gets into character to deliver key lessons -- usually as a Shakespearean character, but sometimes as the captain of the USS Enterprise or Sherlock Holmes.

>"It is also more work. It is more demanding, but it is more satisfying. You see this joy on their faces," said Minac.

>The regular classroom experience, though, is nothing like this.

>Greg Clayton, a fourth-year business student at the University of Calgary, figures his university experience is typical: he's had a few good professors, but plenty of bores.

>"I've had some pretty bad teachers, just really poor communication and organizational skills," he said. "You have your good teacher, but your average teachers are clearly hired for their research skills or their credentials rather than teaching."

>The extra effort by professors like Minac has, until now, gone largely unnoticed by administrators, despite dire warnings over the years about the state of undergraduate teaching and the systemic bias that favours groundbreaking research over inspiring teaching.

>Stewart Smith's 1991 commission of inquiry into the state of university education provided the first jolt to the system, said Gary Poole, director of UBC's Centre for Teaching and Academic Growth and past president of Canada's Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education.

>Smith, the former chairman of the Science Council of Canada, chastised universities for narrowly equating scholarship with research profiled in prestigious journals. Smith concluded, "teaching was seriously undervalued in Canadian universities and nothing less than a total recommitment to it was required."

>More than a decade later, recipients of prestigious 3M University Teaching Fellowship issued a scathing statement report in the fall of 2002, saying university teaching merited a C minus, "at best."

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>David M. Kaufman, M.Eng., Ed.D.

>Director, Learning & Instructional Development Centre &

>Professor, Faculty of Education

>Simon Fraser University

>7560 EDB, 8888 University Drive

>Burnaby, BC V5A 1S6 CANADA

>Tel: 604-291-3190 Cell: 604-773-7809 Fax: 604-291-4900